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THE WORKS OF JAMES THOMSON.

WITH HIS LAST CORRECTIONS and IMPROVEMENTS.

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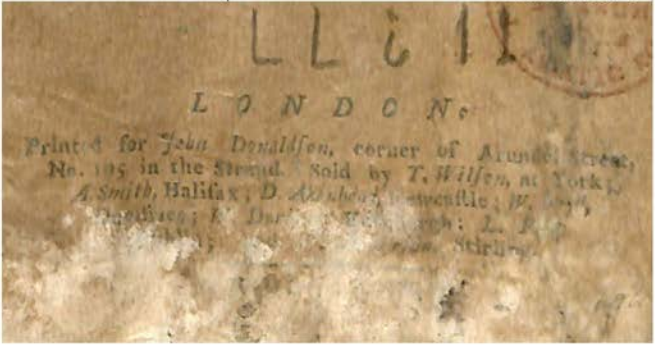
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.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00046513

A

POEM

Sacred to the MEMORY of

Sir ISAAC NEWTON,

Inſcrib'd to the RIGHT HONOURABLE

Sir ROBERT WALPOLE.

SHALL the great ſoul of NEWTON quit this earth,
To mingle with his ſtars; and every Muſe,
Aſtoniſh'd into ſilence, ſhun the weight
Of honours due to his illuſtrious name?
But what can man?—Even now the ſons of light,
In ſtrains high-warbled to ſeraphic lyre,
Hail his arrival on the coaſt of bliſs.
Yet am not I deterr'd, tho' high the theme,
And ſung to harps of angels, for with you,
Ethereal Powers! ambitious I aſpire
In nature's general ſymphony to join

And what new wonders can ye ſhow your gue
Who, while on this dim ſpot, where mortals toil
Clouded in duſt, from Motion's ſimple laws,
Cloud trace the ſecret hand of Providence,
Wide-working thro' this univerſal frame.

Have ye not liſten'd while he bound the Suns,
And Planets, to their ſpheres! th' unequal taſk
Of human-kind till then. Oft had they roll'd
O'er erring man the year, and oft diſgrac'd
The pride of ſchools, before their courſe was known
Full in its cauſes and effects to him,
All piercing ſage! Who ſat not down and dream'd
Romantic ſchemes, defended by the din
Of ſpecious words, and tyranny of names;
But, bidding his amazing mind attend,
And with hereic Patience years on years
Deep-ſearching, ſaw at laſt the Syſtem dawn,
And ſhine, of all his race, on him alone.

What were his raptures then! how pure! how
ſtrong!
And what the triumphs of old Greece and Rome,
By his diminiſh'd, but the pride of boys
In ſome ſmall fray victorious! when inſtead
Of ſhattered parcels of this earth uſurp'd
By violence unmanly, and fore-deed
Of cruelty and blood, nature herſelf
Stood all ſubdu'd by him, and open laid
Her every latent glory to his view.

All

ALL intellectual eye, our ſolar round
Firſt gazing thro', he, by the blended power
Of *Gravitation* and *Projection*, ſaw
The whole in ſilent harmony revolve.
From unaſſiſted viſion hid, the moons
To chear remoter planets numerous form'd,
By him in all their mingled tracts were ſeen.
He alſo fix'd our wandering queen of night,
Whether ſhe wanes into a ſcanty orb,
Or, waxing broad, with her pale ſhadowy light,
In a ſoft deluge overflows the ſky.
Her every motion clear-diſcerning, He
Adjuſted to the mutual Main, and taught
Why now the mighty maſs of water ſwells
Reſiſtleſs, heaving on the broken rocks,
And the full river turning: Till again
The tide revertive, unattracted, leaves
A yellow waſte of idle ſands behind.

THEN breaking hence, he took his ardent flight
Thro' the blue infinite; and every ſtar,
Which the clear concave of a winter's night
Pours on the eye, or aſtronomic tube,
Far-ſtretching, ſnatches from the dark abyſs;
Or ſuch as farther in ſucceſſive ſkies
To fancy ſhine alone, at his approach
Blaz'd into ſuns, the living centre each
Of an harmonious ſyſtem: all combin'd,
And rul'd unerring by that ſingle power,
Which draws the ſtone projected to the ground.

O UN-

O UNPROFUSE magnificence divine!
O wiſdom truly perfect! thus to call
From a few cauſes ſuch a ſcheme of things,
Effects ſo various, beautiful, and great,
An univerſe compleat! And O belov'd
Of Heaven! whoſe well-purg'd penetrative eye,
The myſtic veil tranſpiercing, inly ſcann'd
The riſing, moving, wide-eſtabliſh'd frame.

HE, firſt of men, with awful wing purſu'd
The Comet thro' the long elliptic curve,
As round innumerous worlds he wound his way;
Till, to the forehead of our evening ſky
Return'd, the blazing wonder glares anew,
And o'er the trembling nations ſhakes diſmay.

THE heavens are all his own; from the wild rule
Of whirling vortices, and circling ſpheres,
To their firſt great ſimplicity reſtor'd.
The ſchools aſtoniſh'd ſtood; but found it vain
To combat ſtill with demonſtration ſtrong,
And, unawakened, dream beneath the blaze
Of truth. At once their pleaſing viſions fled
With the gay ſhadows of the morning mix'd,
When NEWTON roſe, our philoſophic ſun.

THE aerial flow of Sound was known to him,
From whence it firſt in wavy circles breaks,
Till the touch'd organ takes the meſſage in.
Nor could the darting beam of ſight immenſe,

Eſcape

Eſcape his ſwift purſuit, and meaſuring eye.
Even Light itſelf, which every thing diſplays,
Shone undiſcover'd, till his brighter mind
Untwiſted all the ſhining robe of day;
And, from the whitening undiſtinguiſhed blaze,
Collecting every ray into his kind,
To the charm'd eye educ'd the gorgeous train
Of Parent-colours. First the flaming Red
Sprung vivid forth; the tawny Orange next;
And next delicious Yellow; by whoſe ſide
Fell the kind beams of all-refreſhing Green:
Then the pure Blue, that ſwells autumnal ſkies,
Ethereal play'd; and then, of ſadder hue,
Emerg'd the deepen'd Indico, as when
The heavy-ſkirted evening droops with froſt:
While the laſt gleamings of refracted light
Dy'd in the fainting Violet away.
Theſe, when the clouds diſtil the roſy ſhower,
Shine out diſtinct adown the wat'ry bow:
While o'er our heads the dewy viſion bends
Delightful, melting on the fields beneath.
Myriads of mingling dyes from theſe reſult,
And myriads ſtill remain; infinite ſource
Of beauty, ever-blushing, ever-new!

Did ever poet image aught ſo fair,
Dreaming in whiſpering groves, by the hoarſe brook!
Or prophet, to whoſe rapture heaven deſcends!
Even now the ſetting ſun and ſhifting clouds,
Seen, Greenwich, from thy lovely heights, declare
How juſt [illegible] the refractive law.

THE

THE noiſy tide of time, all bearing down
To vaſt eternity's unbounded ſea,
Where the green iſlands of the happy ſhine,
He ſtemm'd alone; and to the ſource (involv'd
Deep in primeval gloom) aſcending, rais'd
His lights at equal diſtances, to guide
Hiſtorian, wilder'd, on his darkſome way.

BUT who can number up his labours? who
His high diſcoveries ſing? when but a few
Of the deep-ſtudying race can ſtretch their minds
To what he knew: In fancy's lighter thought,
How ſhall the muſe then graſp the mighty theme?

WHAT wonder thence that his devotion ſwell'd
Reſponſive to his knowledge! For could he,
Whoſe piercing mental eye diffuſive ſaw
The finiſh'd univerſity of things,
In all its order, magnitude, and parts,
Forbear inceſſant to adore that Power
Who fills, ſuſtains, and actuates the whole?

SAY, ye who beſt can tell, ye happy few,
Who ſaw him in the ſofteſt lights of life,
All unwithheld, indulging to his friends
The vaſt unborrow'd treaſures of his mind,
Oh ſpeak the wondrous man! how mild, how calm,
How greatly humble, how divinely good;
How firm eſtabliſh'd on eternal truth;
Fervent in doing well, with every nerve
Still

Still preſſing on, forgetful of the paſt,
And panting for perfection: far above
Thoſe little cares, and viſionary joys,
That ſo perplex the fond impaſſion'd heart
Of ever-cheated, ever-truſting man.

AND you, ye hopeleſs gloomy-minded tribe,
You who, unconſcious of thoſe nobler flights
That reach impatient at immortal life,
Againſt the prime endearing privilege
Of Being dare contend, ſay, can a ſoul
Of ſuch extenſive, deep, tremendous powers,
Enlarging ſtill, be but a finer breath
Of ſpirits dancing thro' their tubes awhile,
And then for ever loſt in vacant air?

BUT hark! methinks I hear a warning voice,
Solemn as when ſome awful change is come,
Sound thro' the world--*'Tis done--The meaſure's full;*
And I reſign my charge.——Ye mouldering ſtones,
That build the tow'ring pyramid, the proud
Triumphal arch, the monument effac'd
By ruthleſs ruin, and whate'er ſupports
The worſhip name of hoar antiquity,
Down to the duſt! what grandeur can ye boaſt
While NEWTON lifts his column to the ſkies,
Beyond the waſte of time. Let no weak drop
Be ſhed for him. The virgin in her bloom
Cut off, the joyous youth, and darling child,
Theſe are the tombs that claim the tender tear,

And

And elegiac ſong. But NEWTON calls
For other notes of gratulation high
That now he wanders thro' thoſe endleſs worlds
He here ſo well deſcried, and wondering talks,
And hymns their Author with his glad compeers.

O BRITAIN's boaſt! whether with angels thou
Sitteſt in dread diſcourſe, or fellow-bleſt,
Who joy to ſee the honour of their kind;
Or whether, mounted on cherubic wing,
Thy ſwift career is with the whirling orbs,
Comparing things with things, in rapture loſt,
And grateful adoration, for that light
So plenteous ray'd into thy mind below,
From LIGHT himſelf; Oh look with pity down
On human-kind, a frail erroneous race!
Exalt the ſpirit of a downward world!
O'er thy dejected country chief preſide,
And be her Genius call'd! her ſtudies raiſe,
Correct her manners, and inſpire her youth.
For, tho' depraved and ſunk, ſhe brought thee forth,
And glories in thy name; ſhe points thee out
To all her ſons, and bids them eye thy ſtar:
While in expectance, of the ſecond life,
When time ſhall be no more, thy ſacred duſt
Sleeps with her kings, and dignifies the ſcene.

BRI-

BRITANNIA.

A

POEM

——Et tantas audetis tollere moles?
Quos ego—ſed motos præſtat componere fluctus.
Poſt mihi non ſimili pœna commiſſa luetis.
Maturate fugam, regique hæc dicite veſtro:
Non illi imperium pelagi, ſævumque tridentem,
Sed mihi ſorte datum.——

VIRG.

AS on the ſea-beat ſhore Britannia ſat,
Of her degenerate ſons the faded fame,
Deep in her anxious heart, revolving ſad:
Bare was her throbbing boſom to the gale,
That hoarſe, and hollow, from the bleak ſurge blew;
Looſe flow'd her treſſes; rent her azure robe 6

Hung

Hung o'er the deep; fro[illegible] maj[illegible]tic brow
She tore the laurel, and fl[illegible]e the bay.
Nor ceas'd the copious [illegible] her cheeks;
Nor ceas'd her ſobs to [illegible] the main.
Peace diſcontented, nigh d[illegible]ng ſtretch'd
Her dove-like wings. And w[illegible], tho' greatly rous'd,
Yet mourns his fetter'd hands. While thus the queen
Of nations ſpoke; and what ſhe ſaid the muſe
Recorded, faithful, in unbidden verſe.

EVEN not yon ſail, that from the ſky-mixt wave,
Dawns on the ſight, and wafts the ROYAL YOUTH*,
A freight of future glory to my ſhore;
Even not the flattering view of golden days,
And riſing periods yet of bright renown,
Beneath the PARENTS, and their endleſs line
Thro' late-revolving time, can ſooth my rage;
While, unchaſtis'd, the inſulting Spaniard dares
Inſeſt the trading flood, full of vain war
Deſpiſe my navies, and my merchants ſeize;
As, truſting to falſe peace, they fearleſs roam
The world of waters wild, made, by the toil,
And liberal blood of glorious ages, mine;
Nor burſts my ſleeping thunder on their head.
Whence this unwonted patience? this weak doubt?
This tame beſeeching of rejected peace?
This meek forbearance? this unmanly fear,
To generous Britons never known before?

And

* FREDRICK Prince of Wa[illegible]

And ſail'd my fl[illegible]s for this; on Indian tides
To float, un[illegible] with the veering winds?
The mockery [illegible] while hot diſeaſe,
And ſloth diſte[illegible], ſwept off burning crouds,
For action ardent [illegible] the deep,
Inglorious, ſunk th[illegible] in a wat'ry grave.
There now they lie beneath the rolling flood,
Far from their friends, and country unaveng'd;
And back the drooping war-ſhip comes again,
Diſpirited, and thin; her ſons aſham'd
Thus idly to review their native ſhore;
With not one glory ſparkling in their eye,
One triumph on their tongue. A paſſenger,
The violated merchant comes along;
That far-ſought wealth, for which the noxious gale
He drew, and ſwate beneath equator ſuns,
By lawleſs force detain'd; a force that ſoon
Would melt away, and every ſpoil reſign,
Were once the Britiſh lion heard to roar.
Whence is it that the proud Iberian thus,
In their own well-aſſerted element,
Dares rouze to wrath the maſters of the main?
Who told him, that the big incumbent war
Would not, ere this, have roll'd his trembling ports
In ſmoky ruin? and his guilty ſtores,
Won by the ravage of a [illegible]'d world,
Yet unatton'd, ſunk in the ſwallowing deep,
Or led the glittering prize into the Thames?

There was a time (Oh let my languid ſons
Reſume their ſpirit at the rouzing thought!)

When

When all the pride of Spain, in one dread fleet,
Swell'd o'er the lab'ring surge; I! the whole heaven
Of clouds, wide-roll'd before the soundless breeze,
Gaily the splendid armament [illegible]
Exultant plough'd, reflecting [illegible]red gleam,
As sunk the sun, o'er all the flaming Vast;
Tall, gorgeous, and elate; drunk with the dream
Of easy conquest; while their bloated war,
Strech'd out from sky to sky, the gather'd force
Of ages held in its capacious womb
But soon, regardless of the cumbrous pomp,
My dauntless Britons came, a gloomy few,
With tempest black, the goodly scene deform'd,
And laid their glory waste. The bolts of fate
Resistless thunder'd thro' their yielding sides;
Fierce o'er their beauty blaz'd the lurid flame;
And seiz'd in horrid grasp, or shatter'd wide,
Amid the mighty waters, deep they sunk.
Then too from every promontory chill,
Rank fen, and cavern, where the wild wave works,
I swept confederate winds, and swell'd a storm.
Round the glad isle, snatch'd by the vengeful blast,
The scatter'd remnants drove; on the blind shelve
And pointed rock, that marks th' indented shore,
Relentless dash'd, where loud the northern main
Howls thro' the fractur'd Caledonian isles.

Such were the dawnings of my watry reign;
But since how vast is now, how absolute,
Even in those troubled times, when dreadful Blake
Ay'd

Aw'd angry nations with the Britiſh name,
Let every humbled ſtate, let Europe ſay,
Suſtain'd, and [illegible]'d, by my naval arm.
Ah! what muſt thoſe immortal ſpirits think
Of your poor ſhifts? Thoſe for their country's good
Who fac'd the blackeſt danger, knew no fear,
No mean ſubmiſſion, but commanded peace.
Ah! how with indignation muſt they burn?
(If aught, but joy, can touch etherial breaſts)
With ſhame? with grief? to ſee their feeble ſons
Shrink from that empire o'er the conquer'd ſeas,
For which their wiſdom plan'd, their councils glow'd,
And their veins bled thro' many a toiling age.

Oh firſt of human bleſſings! and ſupreme!
Fair Peace! how lovely, how delightful thou!
By whoſe wide tie, the kindred ſons of men,
Like brothers live, in amity combin'd,
And unſuſpicious faith; while honeſt toil
Gives every joy, and to thoſe joys a right,
Which idle, barbarous rapine but uſurps.
Pure is thy reign; when unaccurs'd by blood,
Nought, ſave the ſweeteſs of indulgent ſhewers,
Trickling diſtils into the vernant glebe;
Inſtead of mangled carcaſes, fad-ſeen,
When the blythe ſheaves lie ſcatter'd o'er the field;
When only ſhining ſhares, the crooked knife,
And hooks invade the vegetable wound;

When the land bluſhes with the roſe alone,
The falling fruitage, and the bleeding vine.
Oh, Peace! thou ſource, and ſoul of ſocial life;
Beneath whoſe calm inſpiring influence,
Science his views enlarges, Arts refines,
And ſwelling Commerce opens all her ports;
Bleſt be the man divine, who gives us thee!
Who bids the trumpet huſh his horrid clang,
Nor blow the giddy nations into rage;
Who ſheaths the murd'rous blade; the deadly gun
Into the well-pil'd armory returns;
And, every vigour from the work of death,
To grateful induſtry converting, makes
The country flouriſh, and the city ſmile.
Unviolated, him the virgin ſings;
And him the ſmiling mother to her train.
Of him the ſhepherd, in the peaceful dale,
Chaunts; and, the treaſures of his labour ſure,
The huſbandman of him, as at the plough,
Or team, he toils. With him the ſailor ſooths,
Beneath the trembling moon, the midnight wave;
And the full city, warm, from ſtreet to ſtreet,
And ſhop to ſhop, reſponſive, rings of him.
Nor joys one land alone; his praiſe extends
Far as the ſun rolls the diffuſive day;
Far as the breeze can bear the gifts of peace,
Till all the happy nations catch the ſong.

What

WHAT would not, Peace! the patriot bear for thee?
What painful patience? What inceſſant care?
What mixt anxiety? What ſleepleſs toil?
Even from the raſh protected what reproach?
For he thy value knows; thy friendſhip he
To human nature: but the better thou,
The richer of delight, ſometimes the more
Inevitable war; when ruffian force
Awakes the fury of an injur'd ſtate
Even the good patient man, whom reaſon rules,
Rous'd by bold inſult, and injurious rage,
With ſharp, and ſudden check, th' aſtoniſh'd ſons
Of violence confounds; firm as his cauſe,
His bolder heart; in awful juſtice clad;
His eyes effulging a peculiar fire:
And, as he charges thro' the proſtrate war,
His keen arm teaches faithleſs men, no more
To dare the ſacred vengeance of the jutt.

AND what, my thoughtleſs ſons, ſhould fire you more,
Than when your well earn'd empire of the deep
The leaſt beginning injury receives?
What better cauſe can call your lightning forth?
Your thunder wake: your deareſt life demand?
What better cauſe, than when your country ſees
The ſly deſtruction at her vitals aim'd?
For oh it much imports you, 'tis your all,
To keep your trade intire, in fire the force,

And honour of your fleets; o'er that to watch,
Even with a hand ſevere, and jealous eye.
In intercourſe be gentle, generous, juſt,
By wiſdom poliſh'd, and of manners fair;
But on the ſea be terrible untam'd,
Unconquerable ſtill: let none eſcape,
Who ſhall but aim to touch your glory there.
Is there the man into the lion's den
Who dares intrude, to ſnatch his young away?
And is a Briton ſeiz'd? and ſeiz'd beneath
The ſlumbering terrors of a Britiſh fleet?
Then ardent riſe! Oh great in vengeance riſe!
O'erturn the proud, teach rapine to reſtore:
And as you ride ſublimely round the world,
Make every veſſel ſtoop, make every ſtate
At once their welfare and their duty know.
This is your glory; this your wiſdom; this
The native pow'r for which you were deſign'd
By fate, when fate deſign'd the firmeſt ſtate,
That e'er was ſeated on the ſubject ſea;
A ſtate, alone, where liberty ſhould live.
In theſe late times, this evening of mankind,
When Athens, Rome, and Carthage are no more,
The world almoſt in ſtaviſh cloth diſſolv'd.
For this, theſe rocks around your coaſt were
thrown,
For this, your oaks, peculiar hardened ſhoot
Strong into ſturdy growth; for this, your hearts
Swell with a ſullen courage growing ſtill
As dangers grow, and ſtrength, and toil for this

Are liberal pour'd o'er all the fervent land.
Then cheriſh this, this unexpenſive power,
Undangerous to the public, ever prompt,
By laviſh nature thruſt into your hand:
And, unencumber'd with the bulk immenſe
Of conqueſt, whence huge empires roſe, and fell
Self-cruſh'd, extend your reign from ſhore to ſhore,
Where-e'er the wind your high beheſts can blow;
And fix it deep on this eternal baſe.
For ſhould the ſliding fabric once give way,
Soon ſlackened quite, and paſt recovery broke,
It gathers ruin as it rolls along,
Steep-ruſhing down to that devouring gulf,
Where many a mighty empire buried lies.
And ſhould the big redundant flood of trade,
In which ten thouſand thouſand labours join
Their ſeveral currents, till the boundleſs tide
Rolls in a radiant deluge o'er the land;
Should this bright ſtream, the leaſt inflected, point
Its courſe another way, o'er other lands
The various treaſure would reſiſtleſs pour,
Ne'er to be won again; its ancient tract
Left a vile channel, deſolate, and dead,
With all around a miſerable waſte:
Not Egypt, were, her better heaven, the Nile
Turn'd in the pride of flow; when o'er his rocks,
And roaring cataracts, beyond the reach
Of dizzy vision pil'd, in one wide flaſh
An Ethiopian deluge foams amain;

(Whence wondering fable trac'd him from the
sky)
Even not that prime of earth, where harvest's croud
On untill'd harvests, all the ceeding year,
If of the fat o'erflowing culture robb'd,
Were then a more uncomfortable wild,
Steril, and void; than of her trade depriv'd,
Britons, your boasted isle: her princes sunk;
Her high-built honour mouldr'd to the dust;
Unnerv'd her force: her sp[illegible] vanish'd quite;
With rapid wing her rich [illegible] away;
Her unfrequented ports alone the sign
Of what she was; her merchants scatter'd wide;
Her hollow ships shut up; and in her streets,
Her fields, woods, markets, villages, and roads,
The chearful voice of labour heard no more.

Oh let not then waste luxury impair
That manly soul of toil, which strings your nerves,
And your own proper happiness creates!
Oh let not the fell, penetrating plague
Creep on the free-born mind; and working there,
With the sharp tooth of many a new form'd want,
Endless, and idle all, eat out the heart
Of Liberty; the high conception blast;
The noble sentiment, the impatient scorn
Of base subjection, and the swelling wish
For general good, erasing from the mind:
While nought but narrow selfishness succeeds,
And low design, the sneaking passions all

Let

Let looſe, and reigning in the rankled breaſt.
Induc'd at laſt, by ſcarce perceiv'd degrees,
Sapping the very frame of government,
And life, a total diſſolution comes;
Sloth, ignorance, dejection, flattery, fear;
Oppreſſion raging o'er the waſte he makes;
The human being almoſt quite extinct;
And the whole ſtate in broad corruption ſinks.
Oh ſhun that gulph: that gaping ruin ſhun!
And countleſs ages roll it far away
From you, ye heaven-belov'd! may Liberty,
The light of life! the ſun of human-kind!
Whence heroes, bards, and patriots borrow flame,
Even where the keen depreſſive North, deſcends,
Still ſpread, exalt, and actuate your powers!
While flaviſh ſouthern climates beam in vain.
And may a public ſpirit from the throne,
Where every virtue ſits, go copious forth,
Live o'er the land! the finer arts inſpire;
Make thoughtful Science raiſe his penſive head,
Blow the freſh bay, bid induſtry rejoice,
And the rough ſons of loweſt Labour ſmile.
As when, profuſe of ſpring, the looſened Weſt
Lifts up the pining year, and balmy breathes
Youth, life, and love, and beauty o'er the world.

But haſte we from theſe melancholy ſhores,
Nor to deaf winds, and waves, our fruitleſs plaint
Pour weak; the country claims our active aid;
That let us roam; and where we find a ſpark
Of

Of public virtue, blow it into flame.
Lo! now my ſons, the ſons of freedom! meet
In awful ſenate; thither let us fly;
Burn in the patriot's thought, flow from his tongue
In fearleſs truth; myſelf, transform'd, preſide,
And ſhed the ſpirit of Britannia round.

THIS ſaid; her fleeting form, and airy train,
Sunk in the gale; and nought but ragged rocks
Ruſh'd on the broken eye; and nought was heard
But the rough cadence of the daſhing wave.

ANCIENT and MODERN

ITALY

COMPARED:

Being the FIRST PART of

LIBERTY,

A

POEM.

TO HIS

ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERICK

PRINCE of WALES.

SIR,

WHEN I reflect upon that ready condeſcenſion, that preventing generoſity, with which YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS received the following poem under your protection; I can alone aſcribe it to the recommendation, and influence of the ſubject. In you the cauſe and

and concerns of Liberty have ſo zealous a patron, as entitles whatever may have the leaſt tendency to promote them, to the diſtinction of your favour. And who can entertain this delightful reflection, without feeling a pleaſure far ſuperior to that of the fondeſt author; and of which all true lovers of their country muſt participate? To behold the nobleſt diſpoſitions of the prince and of the patriot, united: an overflowing benevolence, generoſity, and candour of heart, joined to an enlightened zeal for liberty, an intimate perſuaſion that on it depends the happineſs and glory both of kings and people: to ſee theſe ſhining out in public virtues, as they have hitherto ſmiled in all the ſocial lights and private accompliſhments of life, is a proſpect that cannot but inſpire a general ſentiment of ſatisfaction and gladneſs, more eaſily to be felt than expreſſed.

If the following attempt to trace Liberty, from the firſt ages down to her excellent eſtabliſhment in GREAT BRITAIN, can at all merit your approbation, and prove an entertainment

ment to YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS; if it can in any degree anſwer the dignity of the ſubject, and of the name under which I preſume to ſhelter it; I have my beſt reward: particularly as it affords me an opportunity of declaring that I am, with the greateſt zeal and reſpect,

SIR,

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

Moſt obedient

And moſt devoted Servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

The CONTENTS of PART I.

THE following Poem is thrown into the form of a Poetical Viſion. Its Scene the ruins of antient Rome. The GODDESS *of* LIBERTY, *who is ſuppoſed to ſpeak through the whole, appears, characterized as* BRITISH LIBERTY; *to Ver.* 44. *Gives a view of Antient Italy, and particularly of Republican Rome, in all her magnificence and glory; to Ver.* 112. *This contraſted by Modern Italy; its valleys, mountains, culture, cities, people: the difference appearing ſtrongeſt in the capital City Rome; to Ver.* 234. *The ruins of the great works of* LIBERTY *more magnificent than the borrowed pomp of* OPPRESSION; *and from them revived Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture; to Ver.* 256. *The old Romans apoſtrophiz'd, with regard to the ſeveral melancholy changes in Italy: Horace, Tully, and Virgil, with regard to their Tibur, Tuſculum, and Naples; to Ver.* 287. *That once fineſt and moſt ornamented part of Italy, all along the coaſt of Baiæ, how changed; to Ver.* 321. *This deſolation of Italy applied to Britain; to Ver.* 344. *Addreſs to the* GODDESS *of* LIBERTY, *that ſhe would deduce from the firſt ages, her chief eſtabliſhments, the deſcription of which conſtitute the ſubject of the following parts of this Poem. She aſſents, and commands what ſhe ſays to be ſung in Britain; whoſe happineſs, ariſing from freedom, and a limited monarchy, ſhe marks; to Ver.* 391. *An immediate Viſion attends, and paints her words. Invocation.*

LIBERTY.

PART I.

O My lamented TALBOT! while with thee
The Muſe gay-rov'd the glad Heſperian round,
And drew th' inſpiring breath of antient arts;
Ah! little thought ſhe her returning verſe
Should ſing our darling ſubject to thy Shade.
And does the myſtic veil, from mortal beam,
Involve thoſe eyes where every virtue ſmil'd,
And all thy FATHER's candid ſpirit ſhone?
The light of reaſon, pure, without a cloud;
Full of the generous heart, the mind regard;
Honour-diſdaining blemiſh, cordial faith,
And limpid truth, that looks the very ſoul.
But to the death of mighty nations turn,
My ſtrain; be there abſorpt the private tear.

MUSING, I lay; warm from the ſacred walks,
Where at each ſtep imagination burns:
While ſcatter'd wide around, awful, and hoar,
Lies, a vaſt monument, once-glorious Rome,
The tomb of empire! ruins! that efface
Whate'er, of finiſh'd, modern pomp can boaſt.

SNATCH'D by theſe wonders to that world where thought
Unfetter'd ranges, Fancy's magic hand
Led me anew o'er all the ſolemn ſcene,
Still in the mind's pure eye more ſolemn dreſt.
When ſtraight, methought, the fair majeſtic Power
Of LIBERTY appear'd. Not, as of old,
Extended in her hand the cap, and rod,
Whoſe ſlave-enlarging touch gave double life:
But her bright temples bound with Britiſh oak,
And naval honours nodded on her brow.
Sublime of port: looſe o'er her ſhoulder flow'd
Her ſea-green robe, with conſtellations gay.
An iſland-goddeſs now; and her high care
[illegible], the miſtreſs of the main.
My heart beat filial tranſport at the ſight;
And, as ſhe mov'd to ſpeak, th' awaken'd Muſe
Liſten'd intent: while ſhe look'd around,
With mournful eye the well-known ruins mark'd,
And then, her ſighs repreſſing, thus began.

MINE are theſe wonders, all thou ſee'ſt is mine;
But ah how chang'd! the ſhade, poor remains
Of

Of what exalted once th' Auſonian ſhore.
Look back thro' time; and, riſing from the gloom,
Mark the dread ſcene, that paints whate'er I ſay.

The great Republic ſee! that glow'd, ſublime,
With the mixt freedom of a thouſand ſtates;
Rais'd on the thrones of Kings her Carule Chair,
And by her Faſces, aw'd the ſubject world.
See buſy millions quickning all the land,
With cities throng'd, and teeming culture high:
For Nature then ſmil'd on her freeborn ſons,
And pour'd the plenty that belongs to Men.
Behold, the country chearing, villas riſe,
In lively proſpect; by the ſecret lapſe
Of Brooks now loſt and ſtreams renown'd in ſong:
In Umbria's cloſing vales, or on the brow
Of her brown hills that breathe the ſcented gale:
On Baiæ's viny coaſt; where peaceful ſeas,
Fann'd by kind zephyrs, ever kiſs the ſhore;
And ſons unclouded ſhine, thro' pureſt air:
Or in the ſpacious neighbourhood of Rome;
Far-ſhining upward to the Sabine hill,
To Anio's roar, and Tibur's olive ſhade;
To where Preneſte lifts her airy brow;
Or downward ſpreading to the ſunny ſhore,
Where Alba breathes the freſhneſs of the main.

See diſtant mountains leave their valleys dry,
And o'er the proud Arcade their tribute pour,
To ſave imperial Rome. For ages laid,
Deep, many mouth'd, diverging every way,

With tombs of heroes ſacred, ſee her roads:
By various nations trod, and ſuppliant kings;
With legions flaming, or with triumph gay.

FULL in the centre of theſe wondrous works,
The pride of earth! Rome in her glory ſee!
Behold her demigods, in ſenate met;
All head to counſel, and all heart to act:
The commonweal inſpiring every tongue
With fervent eloquence, unbrib'd, and bold;
Ere tame Corruption taught the ſervile herd
To rank obedient to a maſter's voice.

HER Forum ſee, warm, popular, and loud,
In trembling wonder huſh'd, when the two *SIRES,
As they the private father greatly quell'd,
Stood up the public fathers of the ſtate.
See Juſtice judging there, in human ſhape.
Hark! how with freedom's voice it thunders high,
Or in ſoft murmurs ſinks to TULLY's tongue.

[redacted], her Cenſus, ſee; her generous troops,
Whoſe pay was glory, and their beſt reward
Free for their country and for ME to die;
Ere mercenary murder grew a trade.

MARK, as the purple triumph waves along,
The higheſt pomp and loweſt fall of life.

HER

* L. J. BRUTUS, and [illegible].

HER festive games, the school of heroes, see;
Her Circus, ardent with contending youth;
Her streets, her temples, palaces, and baths,
Full of fair forms, of Beauty's eldest born,
And of a people cast in virtue's mold.
While sculpture lives around, and Asian hills
Lend their best stores to heave the pillar'd dome:
All that to Roman strength the softer touch
Of Grecian art can join. But language fails
To paint this sun, this center of mankind;
Where every virtue, glory, treasure, art,
Attracted strong, in heightened lustre met.

NEED I the contrast mark? unjoyous view!
A land in all, in government, and arts,
In virtue, genius, earth and heaven, revers'd.
Who but these far-fam'd ruins to behold,
Proofs of a people, whose heroic aims
Soar'd far above the little selfish sphere
Of doubting modern life; who but inflam'd
With classic zeal, these consecrated scenes
Of men and deeds to trace; unhappy land
Would trust thy wilds, and cities loose of sway?

ARE these the vales, that, once, exulting states
In their warm bosom fed? The mountains these,
On whose high-blooming sides my sons, of old,
Bred to glory? These dejected towns,
Where, mean, and timid, life can scarce subsist,
The [illegible] of [illegible] opulence, and pomp?

COME!

COME! by whatever ſacred name diſguis'd,
OPPRESSION, come! and in thy works rejoice!
See nature's richeſt plains to putrid fens
Turn'd by thy fury. From their chearful bounds,
See raz'd th' enlivening village, farm, and ſeat.
Firſt, rural toil, by thy rapacious hand
Robb'd of his poor reward, reſign'd the plow;
And now he dares not turn the noxious glebe.
'Tis thine intire. The lonely ſwain himſelf,
Who loves at large along the graſſy downs
His flocks to paſture, thy drear champaign flies.
Far as the ſickening eye can ſweep around,
'Tis all one deſert, deſolate, and grey,
Graz'd by the ſullen buffalo alone;
And where the rank uncultivated growth
Of rotting ages taints the paſſing gale.
Beneath the baleful blaſt the city pines,
Or ſinks infeebled, or infected burns.
Beneath it mourns the ſolitary road,
Roll'd in rude mazes o'er th' abandon'd waſte;
While ancient ways, ingulf'd, are ſeen no more.

Such thy dire plains, thou ſelf-deſtroyer! Foe
To human-kind! Thy mountains too, profuſe,
Where ſavage Nature blooms, ſeem their ſad plaint
To raiſe againſt thy deſolating toil.
There on the breezy brow, where thriving ſtates,
And famous cities, [illegible] to the pleas'd ſun,
Far other ſcenes of [illegible] cultur ſpread,
Pale ſhine thy ragged towns. Neglected round,
Each harveſt pines; the liv[illegible] produce

Of heartleſs labour; while thy hated joys,
Not proper pleaſure, lift the lazy hand.
Better to ſink in ſloth the woes of life,
Than wake their rage with unavailing toil.
Hence drooping art almoſt to nature leaves
The rude unguided year. Thin wave the gifts
Of yellow Ceres, thin the radiant bluſh
Of orchard reddens in the warmeſt ray.
To weedy wildneſs run, no rural wealth
(Such as dictators fed) the garden pours.
Crude the wild olive flows, and foul the vine;
Nor juice Cœcubian, nor Falernian, more,
Streams life and joy, ſave in the Muſe's bowl.
Unſeconded by art, the ſpinning race
Draw the bright thread in vain, and idly toil.
In vain, forlorn in wilds, the citron blows;
And flowering plants perfume the deſert gale.
Thro' the vile thorn the tender myrtle twines
Inglorious droops the laurel, dead to ſong,
And long a ſtranger to the hero's brow.

Nor half thy triumph this: caſt, from [illegible]
Into the haunts of men thy ruthleſs eye
There buxom Plenty never turns her horn;
The grace and virtue of exterior life,
No clean Convenience [illegible] Sleep itſelf,
Leaſt delicate of powers, [illegible] there,
Lays on the bed [illegible]
Thy horrid walks dead, empty, unadorn'd,
See ſtreets whoſe echos never know the voice
Of cheerful bargain, commerce many tongue'd,

And

And art mechanic at his various taſk,
Fervent, employ'd. Mark the deſponding race,
Of occupation void, as void of hope;
Hope, the glad ray, glanc'd from Eternal Good,
That life enlivens, and exalts its powers,
With views of fortune—— madneſs all to them!
By thee relentleſs ſeiz'd their better joys,
To the ſoft aid of cordial airs they fly,
Breathing a kind oblivion o'er their woes,
And love and muſic melt their ſouls away.
From feeble Juſtice ſee how raſh Revenge,
Trembling, the balance ſnatches; and the ſword,
Fearful himſelf, to venal ruffians gives.
See where GOD's altar, nurſing murder, ſtands,
With the red touch of dark aſſaſſins ſtain'd.

But chief let Rome, the mighty city! ſpeak
The full exerted genius of thy reign.
Behold her riſe amid the lifeleſs waſte,
Expiring nature all corrupted round;
While the lone Tybur, thro' the deſert plain,
[illegible] ſtores, and ſullen ſweeps along.
Patch'd from my fragments in unſolid pomp,
Mark how the temple glares; and, artful dreſt,
Amuſive, draws the ſuperſtitious train.
Mark how the palace lifts a lying front,
Concealing often in magnific ſtall,
Proud want; a deep unanimated gloom!
And oft adjoining to the drear abode
Of miſery, whoſe melancholy walls
Seem its voracious grandeur to reproach.

With-

Within the city-bounds, the desert see.
See the rank vine, o'er subterranean roofs,
Indecent, spread; beneath whose fretted gold
It once, exulting, flow'd. The people mark,
Matchless, while fir'd by me; to public good
Inexorably firm, just, generous, brave,
Afraid of nothing but unworthy life,
Elate with glory, an heroic soul.
Known to the vulgar breast: behold them now
A thin despairing number, all subdu'd,
The slaves of slaves, by superstition fool'd,
By vice unman'd and a licentious rule,
In guile ingenious, and in murder brave.
Such in one land, beneath the same fair clime,
Thy sons OPPRESSION, are; and such were MINE.

EVEN with thy labour'd pomp, for whose vain show
Deluded thousands starve; all age-begrim'd,
Torn, robb'd, and scatter'd in unnumber'd sacks,
And by the tempest of two thousand years
Continual shaken, let my Ruins vie.
These roads that yet the Roman hand attests,
Beyond the weak repair of modern toil;
These fractur'd arches, that the chilling stream
No more delighted hear; these rich remains
Of marbles now unknown, where shines imbib'd
Each parent ray; these lofty columns, hew'd
From Afric's farthest shore; one granite all,
These obelisks high-towering to the sky,
Mysterious mark'd with dark Egyptian lore;

These

Theſe endleſs wonders that this * ſacred way
Illumine ſtill, and conſecrate to fame;
Theſe fountains, vaſes, urns, and ſtatues, charg'd
With the fine ſtores of art-completing Greece.
Mine is, beſides, thy every later boaſt:
Thy † Buonartis, *thy* Palladios *mine*;
And *mine* the fair deſigns, which Raphael's ſoul
O'er the live canvaſs, emanating, breath'd.

What would you ſay, ye conquerors of earth!
Ye Romans! could you raiſe the laurel'd head;
Could you the country ſee, by ſeas of blood,
And the dread toil of ages, won ſo dear;
Your pride, your triumph, your ſupreme delight!
For whoſe defence, oft, in the doubtful hour,
You ruſh'd with rapture down the gulf of fate,
Of death ambitious! till by awful deeds,
Virtues, and courage, that amaze mankind,
The queen of nations roſe; poſſeſt of all
Which nature, art, and glory could beſtow:
What would you ſay, deep in the laſt abyſs
Of [illegible]ice, and unambitious want,
Thus to behold her ſunk? Your crouded plains,
Void of their cities; unadorn'd your hills;
Ungrac'd your lakes; your ports to ſhips unknown;
Your lawleſs floods, and your abandon'd ſtreams:
Theſe could you know? theſe could you love again?
Thy Tybur, Horace, could it now inſpire,
Content, poetic eaſe, and rural joy,
Soon burſting into ſong: while thro' the groves
Of

* Via ſacra.

† M. Angelo Buonarroti, Palladio, Raphael of Urbino; the three great modern maſters in ſculpture, architecture, and painting.

Of headlong Anio, dashing to the vale,
In many a tortur'd stream, you mus'd along?
* Yon wild retreat where superstition dreams,
Could, Tully, you your Tusculum believe? 274
And could you deem yon naked hills, that form,
Fam'd in old song, the ship-forsaken † bay,
Your Formian shore? Once the delight of earth,
Where art and nature, ever-smiling, join'd
On the gay land to lavish all their stores. 279
How chang'd, how vacant, Virgil, wide around,
Would now your Naples seem? Disasterd less
By black Vesuvius thundering o'er the coast,
His midnight earthquakes, and his mining fires,
Than by despotic rage ‖: *that* inward gnaws,
A native foe; a *foreign*, tears without. 285
First from your flatter'd Cæsars this began:
Till, doom'd to tyrants an eternal prey,
Thin-peopled spreads, at last, the ‡ Syren plain,
That the dire soul of HANNIBAL disarm'd;
And wrapt in weeds the § shore of Venus lies. 290
There Baiæ sees no more the joyous throng:

* Tusculum is reckoned to have stood on a place now called Grotta Ferrata, a convent of monks.

† The bay of Mola (anciently Formiæ) into which Homer brings Ulysses, and his companions. Near Formiæ Cicero had a villa.

‖ Naples then under the Austrian government.

‡ Cum, now Felice, adjoining to Capua.

§ The coast of Baiæ, which was formerly adorned with the works mentioned in the following lines, and where, amidst many magnificent ruins, those of a temple erected to Venus are still to be seen.

Her bank all beaming with the pride of Rome:
No generous vines now bask along the hills,
Where sport the breezes of the Tyrrhene main:
With baths and temples mixt, no villas rise;
Nor, art-sustain'd amid reluctant waves,
Draw the cool murmurs of the breathing deep:
No spreading ports their sacred arms extend:
No mighty moles the big intrusive storm,
From the calm station, roll resounding back.
An almost total desolation sits,
A dreary stillness, saddening o'er the coast;
* Where, when soft suns and tepid winters rose,
Rejoicing crouds inhal'd the balm of peace;
Where city'd hill to hill reflected blaze;

And where, with Ceres, Bacchus wont to hold
A genial strife. Her youthful form, robust,
Even nature yields; by fire, and earthquake rent:
Whole stately cities in the dark abrupt
Swallow'd at once, or vile in rubbish laid,
A nest for serpents; from the red abyss
New hills, explosive, thrown; the Lucrine lake
A reedy pool: and all to Cuma's point,
The sea recovering his usurp'd domain,
And pour'd triumphant o'er the bury'd dome.

HENCE, Britain, learn; my best-establish'd, last,
And more than Greece, or Rome, my steady reign;
The land where, King and People equal bound
By guardian laws, joy fullest blessings flow;

And

* All along this coast, the antient Romans had their winter retreats; and several populous cities stood.

And where my jealous unſubmitting ſoul,
The dread of tyrants! burns in every breaſt:
Learn hence, if ſuch the miſerable fate
Of an heroic race, the maſters once
Of human-kind; what, when depriv'd of Me,
How grievous muſt be thine In ſpite of climes,
Whoſe ſun-enliven'd ether wakes the ſoul
To higher powers; in ſpite of happy ſoils,
That, but by labour's ſlighteſt aid impell'd,
With treaſures teem to thy cold clime unknown;
If there deſponding fail the common arts,
And ſuſtenance of life: could life itſelf,
Far leſs a thoughtleſs tyrant's hollow pomp,
Subſiſt with thee? Againſt depreſſing ſkies,
Join'd to full-ſpread oppreſſion's cloudy brow,
How could thy ſpirits hold? where vigour find,
Forc'd fruits to tear from their unnative ſoil?
Or, ſtoring every harveſt in thy ports,
To plow the dreadful all-producing wave?

Here paus'd the Goddeſs. By the pauſe aſſur'd,
In trembling accents thus I mov'd my prayer.
"Oh firſt, and moſt benevolent of powers!
"Come from eternal ſplendors here on earth,
"Againſt deſpotic pride, and rage, and luſt,
"To ſhield mankind; to raiſe them to aſſert
"The native rights and honour of their race:
"Teach me thy loveſt ſubject, juſt in zeal
"Yielding to none, the Progreſs of thy Reign,
"And with a ſtrain from Thee enrich the Muſe.
"As Thee alone ſhe ſerves, her patron, Thou,

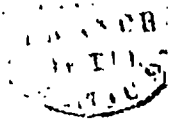
" And great inſpirer be! then will ſhe joy,
" Tho' narrow life her lot, and private ſhade.
" And when her venal voice ſhe barters vile,
" Or to thy open or thy ſecret foes;
" May ne'er thoſe ſacred raptures touch her more,
" By ſlaviſh hearts unfelt! and may her ſong
" Sink in oblivion with the nameleſs crew!
" Vermin of ſtate! to thy o'erflowing light
" That owe their being, yet betray thy cauſe."

THEN, condeſcending kind, the Heavenly Power
Return'd.——" What here, ſuggeſted by the ſcene,
" I ſlight unfold, record, and ſing at home,
" In that bleſt iſle, where (ſo we ſpirits move)
" With one quick effort of my will I am.
" There Truth, unlitens'd, walks; and dares accoſt
" Even kings themſelves, the monarchs of the free!
" Fix'd on my rock, there, an indulgent race
" O'er Britons wield the ſcepter of their choice:
" And there, to finiſh what his ſires began,
" A Prince behold! for Me who burns ſincere,
" Even with a ſubject's zeal. He my great work
" Will parent-like ſuſtain; and added give
" The touch the Graces and the Muſes owe.
" For Britain's glory ſwells his panting breaſt;
" And ancient arts he emulous revolves:
" His pride to let the ſmiling heart abroad;
" Thro' clouds of pomp, that but conceal the man;
" To pleaſe his ſubjects; bounty his delight;
" And all the ſoul of Titus dwells in him.

HAVE

HAIL glorious theme! But how alas! ſhall verſe,
From the crude ſtores of mortal language drawn,
How faint and tedious, ſing, what, piercing deep,
The Goddeſs flaſh'd at once upon my ſoul.
For, clear preciſion all, the tongue of gods
Is harmony itſelf; to every ear
Familiar known, like light to every eye.
Mean time, diſcloſing ages, as ſhe ſpoke,
In long ſucceſſion pour'd their empires forth;
Scene after ſcene, the human drama ſpread:
And ſtill th' embodied picture roſe to ſight.

OH Thou! to whom the Muſes owe their flame;
Who bid'ſt, beneath the pole, Parnaſſus riſe,
And Hippocrene flow; with thy bold eaſe,
The ſtriking force, the lightning of thy thought,
And thy ſtrong phraſe, that rolls profound and clear;
Oh gracious Goddeſs! re-inſpire my ſong;
While I, to nobler than poetic fame
Aſpiring, thy commands to Britons bear.



GREECE:

Being the SECOND PART of

LIBERTY,

A

POEM.

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LIBERTY.

PART II.

THUS ſpoke the Goddeſs of the fearleſs eye;
And at her voice, renew'd, the Viſion roſe.

FIRST, in the dawn of time, with eaſtern ſwains,
In woods, and tents, and cottages, I liv'd;
While on from plain to plain they led their flocks,
In ſearch of clearer ſpring, and freſher field.
Theſe, as increaſing families diſclos'd
The tender ſtate, I taught an equal ſway.
Few were offences, properties, and laws.
Beneath the rural portal, palm o'er-ſpread,
The farther-ſtate met. There Juſtice dealt,
With reaſon then and equity the ſame,
Free as the common air, her prompt decree:
Nor yet had ſtain'd her ſword with ſubjects blood.
The ſimpler arts were all their ſimple wants
Had urg'd to light. But inſtant, theſe ſupply'd,

Another

Another ſet of fonder wants aroſe,
And other arts with them of finer aim;
Till, from refining want to want impell'd,
The mind by thinking puſh'd her latent powers,
And life began to glow, and arts to ſhine.

At firſt, on brutes alone the ruſtic war
Launch'd the rude ſpear; ſwift, as he glar'd along,
On the grim lion, or the robber-wolf.
For then young ſportive life was void of toil,
Demanding little, and with little pleas'd:
But when to manhood grown, and endleſs joys,
Led on by equal toils, the boſom fir'd;
Lewd lazy rapine broke primeval peace,
And, hid in caves and idle foreſts drear,
From the lone pilgrim and the wandering ſwain,
Seiz'd what he durſt not earn. Then brother's blood
Firſt, horrid, ſmok'd on the polluted ſkies.
Awful in juſtice, then the burning youth,
Led by their temper'd fires, on lawleſs men.
The laſt worſt monſters of the ſhaggy wood,
Turn'd the keen arrow, and the ſharpened ſpear.
Then war grew glorious. Heroes then aroſe;
Who, ſcorning coward-ſelf, for others liv'd,
Toil'd for their eaſe, and for their ſafety bled.
Weſt with the living day to Greece I came:
Earth ſmil'd beneath my beam: the Muſe before
Sonorous flew, that low till then in woods
Had mus'd, the reed, and ſigh'd the ſhepherd's pain;
But now, to ſing heroic deeds, ſhe ſwell'd
A nobler note, and bade the banquet burn.

For

For Greece my ſons of Egypt I forſook;
A boaſtful race, that in the vain abyſs
Of fabling ages lov'd to loſe their ſource,
And with their river trac'd it from the ſkies.
While there my laws alone deſpotic reign'd,
And king, as well as people, proud obey'd;
I taught them ſcience, virtue, wiſdom, arts;
By poets, ſages, legiſlators ſought;
The ſchool of poliſh'd life, and human-kind.
But when myſterious Superſtition came,
And, with her * Civil ſiſter league'd, involv'd
In ſtudy'd darkneſs the deſponding mind:
Then Tyrant Power the righteous ſcourge unloos'd:
For yielded reaſon ſpeaks the ſoul a ſlave.
Inſtead of uſeful works, like nature's, great,
Enormous, cruel wonders cruſh'd the land;
And round a tyrant's † tomb, who none deſerv'd,
For one vile carcaſs periſh'd countleſs lives.
Then the great ‡ Dragon, couch'd amid his floods,
Swell'd his fierce heart, and cry'd—"This flood is
"mine,
"'Tis I that bid it flow."—But, undeceiv'd,
His phrenzy ſoon the proud blaſphemer felt;
Felt that, without my fertilizing power,
Suns loſt their force, and Niles o'erflow'd in vain.
Nought could retard me: nor the frugal ſtate
Of riſing Perſia, ſober in extreme,
Beyond the pitch of man, and thence revers'd
Into luxurious waſte: nor yet the poets

Of

* Civil Tyranny. † The Pyramids.
‡ The [illegible]

Of old Phœnicia; firſt for letters fam'd,
That paint the voice, and ſilent ſpeak to ſight,
Of arts prime ſource, and guardian! by fair ſtars,
Firſt tempted out into the lonely deep;
To whom I firſt diſclos'd mechanic arts,
The winds to conquer, to ſubdue the waves,
With all the peaceful power of ruling trade;
Earneſt of Britain. Nôr by theſe retain'd;
Nor by the neighbouring land, whoſe palmy ſhore
The ſilver Jordan leaves. Before me lay
The promis'd Land of Arts, and urg'd my flight.

Hail Nature's utmoſt boaſt! unrival'd Greece!
My faireſt reign! where every power benign
Conſpir'd to blow the flower of human-kind,
And laviſh'd all that genius can inſpire.
Clear ſunny climates, by the breezy main,
Ionian or Ægean, temper'd kind.
Light, airy ſoils. A country rich, and gay;
Broke into hills with balmy odours crown'd,
And, bright with purple harveſt, joyous vales.
Mountains, and ſtreams, where verſe ſpontaneous flow'd;
Whence deem'd by wondering men the ſeat of gods,
And ſtill the mountains and the ſtreams of ſong.
All that boon Nature could luxuriant pour
Of higher materials, and My reſtleſs Arts
Frame into finiſh'd life. How many ſtates,
And chuſtering towns, and monuments of fame,
And ſcenes of glorious deeds, in little bounds!
From the rough craft of bending mountains, beat

By

By Adria's here, there by Ægean waves;
To where the deep-adorning Cyclade Isles
In shining prospect rise, and on the shore
Of farthest Crete resounds the Lybian main.

O'er All two rival cities rear'd the brow,
And balanc'd All. Spread on Eurotas' bank,
Amid a circle of soft rising hills,
The patient Sparta One: the sober, hard,
And man-subduing city; which no shape
Of Pain could conquer, nor of Pleasure charm.
Lycurgus there built, on the solid base
Of equal life, so well a temper'd state;
Where mix'd each government, in such just poise;
Each power so checking, and supporting each;
That firm for ages, and unmov'd it stood,
The fort of Greece! without one giddy hour,
One shock of faction, or of party-rage.
For, drain'd the springs of wealth, Corruption there
Lay withered at the root. Thrice happy land!
Had not neglected art, with weedy vice
Confounded, sunk. But if Athenian arts
Lov'd not the soil; yet there the calm abode
Of wisdom, virtue, philosophic ease,
Of manly sense and wit, in frugal phrase
Confin'd, and press'd into Laconic force.
There too, by rooting thence still treacherous self,
The Public and the Private grew the same.
The children of the nurting Public all,
And at its table fed, for that they toil'd,
For that they liv'd entire, and even for that
The tender mother urg'd her son to die.

Of ſofter genius, but not leſs intent
To ſeize the palm of empire, Athens roſe.
Where with bright marbles big and future pomp,
* Hymettus ſpread, amid the ſcented ſky,
His thymy treaſures to the labouring bee,
And to botanic hand the ſtores of health;
Wrapt in a kind-attenuating clime,
Between † Iliſſus and Cephiſſus glow'd.
This hive of ſcience, ſhedding ſweets divine,
Of active arts, and animated arms.
There, paſſionate for Me, an eaſy-mov'd,
A quick, refin'd, a delicate, humane,
Enlighten'd people reign'd. Oft on the brink
Of ruin, hurry'd by the charm of ſpeech,
Inforcing hatty counſel immature,
Totter'd the raſh Democracy; unpois'd,
And by the rage devour'd, that ever tears
A populace unequal; part too rich,
And part or fierce with want, or abject grown.
Solon, at laſt, their mild reſtorer, roſe:
Allay'd the tempeſt; to the calm of laws
Reduc'd the ſettling whole; and, with the weight
Which the ‡ two ſenates to the public lent,
As with an anchor, fix'd the driving ſtate.

Nor

* A mountain near Athens.

† Two rivers, betwixt which Athens was ſituated.

‡ The Areopagus, or Supreme court of Judicature, which Solon reformed, and improved: and the council of Four Hundred, by him inſtituted. In this council all affairs of ſtate were deliberated, before they came to be voted in the aſſembly of the people.

Nor was my forming care to Theſe confin'd.
For emulation thro' the Whole I pour'd,
Noble contention! who ſhould moſt excel
In government well-pois'd, adjuſted beſt
To public weal: in countries cultur'd high:
In ornamental towns, where order reigns,
Free ſocial life, and poliſh'd manners fair:
In exerciſe, and arms; arms only drawn
For common Greece, to quell the Perſian pride:
In moral ſcience, and in graceful arts.
Hence, as for glory peacefully they ſtrove,
The prize grew greater, and the prize of all.
By conteſt brighten'd, hence the radiant youth
Pour'd every beam; by generous pride inflam'd,
Felt every ardour burn: their great reward
The verdant wreathe, which founding Piſa* gave.

Hence flouriſh'd Greece; and hence a race of men,
As gods by conſcious future times ador'd:
In whom each virtue wore a ſmiling air,
Each ſcience ſhed o'er life a friendly light,
Each art was nature. Spartan valour hence,
At the † fam'd paſs, firm as an iſthmus ſtood;
And the whole eaſtern ocean, waving far
As eye could dart its viſion, nobly check'd.
While in extended battle, o'er the field
Of Marathon, my keen Athenians drove
Before their ardent hand an hoſt of ſlaves.

* Or Olympia, the city where the Olympic games were celebrated.
† The ſtraits of Thermopylæ.

HENCE thro' the continent ten thouſand Greeks
Urg'd a retreat, whoſe glory not the prime
Of victories can reach. Deſerts, in vain,
Oppos'd their courſe; and hoſtile lands unknown;
And deep rapacious floods, dire-bank'd with death;
And mountains, in whoſe jaws deſtruction grin'd;
Hunger, and toil; Armenian ſnows, and ſtorms;
And circling myriads ſtill of barbarous foes.
Greece in their view, and glory yet untouch'd,
Their ſteady column pierc'd the ſcattering herds,
Which a whole empire pour'd; and held its way
Triumphant, by the * Sage-exalted Chief
Fir'd and ſuſtain'd. Oh light and force of mind,
Almoſt Almighty in ſevere extremes!
The ſea at laſt from Colchian mountains ſeen,
Kind-hearted tranſport round their captains threw
The ſoldiers fond embrace; o'erflow'd their eyes
With tender floods, and loos'd the general voice
To cries reſounding loud.—The ſea! The ſea!

IN Attic bounds hence heroes, ſages, wits,
Shone thick as ſtars, the milky way of Greece!
And there each gay wit, and pleaſing grace was theirs,
All the ſoft modes of elegance, and eaſe:
Yet were not courage loſt, the patient touch
Of toiling art, and diſquiſition deep,

MY Spirit pours a vigour thro' the ſoul,
Th' unfetter'd thought with energy inſpires,

In-

Invincible in arts, in the bright field
Of nobler Science, as in that of Arms.
Athenians, thus not leſs intrepid, burſt
The bonds of tyrant darkneſs, than they ſpurn'd
The Perſian chains: while thro' the city, full
Of mirthful quarrel and of witty war,
Inceſſant ſtruggled taſte refining taſte,
And friendly free diſcuſſion, calling forth
From the fair jewel Truth its latent ray.
O'er All ſhone out the great * Athenian Sage,
And Father of Philoſophy: the ſun,
From whoſe white blaze emerg'd each various ſect
Took various teints, but with diminiſh'd beam.
Tutor of Athens! he, in every ſtreet,
Dealt priceleſs treaſure: goodneſs his delight,
Wiſdom his wealth, and glory his reward.
Deep thro' the human heart, with playful art,
His ſimple queſtion ſtole; as into truth,
And ſerious deeds, he ſmil'd the laughing race;
Taught moral happy life, whate'er can bleſs,
Or grace mankind; and what he taught he was.
Compounded high, tho' plain, his doctrine broke
In different Schools. The bold poetic phraſe
Of figur'd Plato; Xenophon's pure ſtrain,
Like the clear brook that ſteals along the vale;
Diſſecting truth, the Stagyrite's keen eye;
The exalted Stoic pride; the Cynic Sneer;
The ſlow-conſenting Academic doubt;
And, joining bliſs to virtue, the glad eaſe

* Socrates.

Of Epicurus, ſeldom underſtood.
They, ever-candid, reaſon ſtill oppos'd
To reaſon; and, ſince virtue was their aim,
Each by ſure practice try'd to prove his way
The beſt. Then ſtood untouch'd the ſolid baſe
Of Liberty, the Liberty of Mind:
For ſyſtem-ſchemes, and ſoul-enſlaving creeds,
Slept with the monſters of ſucceeding times.
From prieſtly darkneſs ſprung th' enlightening arts
Of fire, and ſword, and rage, and horrid names.

O Greece! thou ſapient nurſe of Finer Arts!
Which to bright ſcience blooming Fancy bore,
Be this thy praiſe, that Thou, and Thou alone,
In theſe haſt led the way, in theſe excell'd,
Crown'd with the laurel of aſſenting Time.

In thy full language, ſpeaking mighty things;
Like a clear torrent cloſe, or elſe diffus'd
A broad majeſtic ſtream, and rolling on
Thro' all the winding harmony of ſound:
In it the power of Eloquence, at large,
Breath'd the perſuaſive or pathetic ſoul;
Still'd by degrees the democratic ſtorm,
Or bade it threatening riſe, and tyrants ſhook,
Pluſh'd at the head of their victorious troops.
In it the Muſe, her fury never quench'd,
By mean unyielding phraſe, or jarring ſound,
Her unconfin'd divinity diſplay'd,
And, ſtill harmonious, form'd it to her will.

Or

Or ſoft depreſs'd it to the ſhepherd's moan,
Or rais'd it ſwelling to the tongue of Gods.

Heroic Song was thine; the * Fountain-bard,
Whence each poetic ſtream derives its courſe.
Thine the dread Moral Scene, thy chief delight!
Where idle Fancy durſt not mix her voice,
When Reaſon ſpoke auguſt; the fervent heart
Or plain'd, or ſtorm'd; and in th' impaſſion'd man;
Conceaſing art with art, the poet ſunk.
This potent ſchool of manners, but when left
To looſe neglect, a land-corrupting plague,
Was not unworthy deem'd of public care,
And boundleſs coſt, by thee, whoſe every ſon,
Even laſt mechanic, the true taſte poſſeſs'd
Of what had flavour to the nouriſh'd ſoul.

The ſweet enforcer of the poet's ſtrain,
Thine was the meaning Muſic of the heart.
Not the vain trill, that, void of paſſion, runs
In giddy mazes, tickling idle ears;
But that deep-ſearching voice, and artful hand,
To which reſpondent ſhakes the varied ſoul.

Thy fair ideas, thy delightful forms,
By Love imagin'd, by the Graces touch'd,
The boaſt of well-pleas'd Nature! Sculpture ſeiz'd,
And bade them ever ſmile in Parian ſtone.
Selecting Beauty's choice, and that again
Exalt-

* Homer.

Exalting, blending in a perfect whole,
Thy workmen left even Nature's ſelf behind.
From thoſe far different, whoſe prolific hand
Peoples a nation; they for years on years,
By the cool touches of judicious toil,
Their rapid genius curbing, pour'd it all
Thro' the live features of one breathing ſtone.
There, beaming full, it ſhone; expreſſing Gods:
Jove's awful brow, Apollo's air divine,
The fierce atrocious frown of ſinewed Mars,
Or the ſly graces of the Cyprian Queen.
Minutely perfect all! Each dimple ſunk,
And every muſcle ſwell'd, as nature taught.
In treſſes, braided gay, the marble wav'd;
Flow'd in looſe robes, or thin tranſparent veils;
Sprung into motion; ſoften'd into fleſh;
Was fir'd to Paſſion, or refin'd to Soul.

Nor leſs thy Pencil, with creative touch,
Shed mimic life, when all thy brighteſt dames,
Aſſembled, Zeuxis in his Helen mix'd.
And when Apelles, who peculiar knew
To give a grace that more than mortal ſmil'd,
The Soul of Beauty! call'd the Queen of Love,
Freſh from the billows, bluſhing orient charms.
Even ſuch enchantment then thy pencil pour'd,
That cruel-thoughted War th' impatient torch
Dath'd to the ground; and rather than deſtroy
The * patriot picture, let the city 'ſcape.

FIRST

* When Demetrius beſieged Rhodes, and could have reduced the city, by ſetting fire to that quarter of it, where ſtood the [illegible] of the

First elder Sculpture taught her Sister Art
Correct design; where great ideas shone.
And in the secret trace expression spoke:
Taught her the graceful attitude; the turn,
And beauteous airs of head; the native act,
Or bold, or easy; and, cast free behind
The swelling mantle's well-adjusted fold.
Then the bright Muse, their elder Sister, came;
And bade her follow where she led the way:
Bade earth, and sea, and air, in colours rise;
And copious action on the canvas glow:
Gave her gay Fable; spread Invention's store;
Inlarg'd her view; taught Composition high,
And just Arrangement, circling round one point,
That starts to sight, binds and commands the whole.
Caught from the heavenly Muse a nobler aim,
And scorning the soft trade of mere delight,
O'er all thy temple, porticos, and schools,
Heroic deeds she trac'd, and warm display'd
Each moral beauty to the ravish'd eye.
There, as th' imagin'd presence of the God
Arous'd the mind, or vacant hours induc'd
Calm contemplation, or assembled youth
Burn'd in ambitious circle round the sage,
The living lesson stole into the heart,
With more prevailing force than dwell in words.
There rouse to glory; while, to rural life,

the celebrated Frederick; he chose rather to raise the siege, than hazard the burning of a famous picture called Jasylus, the master-piece of that painter.

The ſofter canvas oft repos'd the ſoul.
There gaily broke the ſun-illumin'd cloud;
The leſs'ning proſpect, and the mountain blue,
Vaniſh'd in air; the precipice frown'd, dire;
While, down the rock, the ruſhing torrent daſh'd;
The ſun ſhone, trembling, o'er the diſtant main;
The tempeſt foam'd, immenſe; the driving ſtorm
Sadden'd the ſkies, and, from the doubling gloom,
On the ſcath'd oak the ragged lightning fell;
In cloſing ſhades, and where the current ſtrays,
With Peace, and Love, and Innocence around,
Pip'd the lone ſhepherd to his feeding flock:
Round happy parents ſmil'd their younger ſelves;
And friends converſ'd, by death divided long.

To public Virtue thus the ſmiling arts,
Unblemiſh'd handmaids, ſerv'd; the Graces they
To dreſs this faireſt Venus. Thus rever'd,
And plac'd beyond the reach of ſordid care,
The high awarders of immortal fame,
Alone for glory thy great maſters ſtrove;
Courted by kings, and by contending ſtates
Aſſum'd the boaſted honour of their birth.

In Architecture too thy rank ſupreme!
That art where moſt magnificent appears
The little builder man; by thee rais'd,
And, ſmiling high, to ſome perfection brought.
Such, thy ſure rules, that Goths of every age,
Who ſcorn'd their aid, have only loaded earth
With labour'd heavy monuments of ſhame.

Not

Not thoſe gay domes that o'er thy ſplendid ſhore,
Shot, all proportion, up. Firſt unadorn'd,
And nobly plain, the manly Doric roſe;
Th' Ionic then, with decent matron grace,
Her airy pillar heav'd, luxuriant laſt,
The rich Corinthian ſpread her wanton wreath.
The whole ſo meaſur'd true, ſo lightly riſen'd off
By fine proportion, that the marble pile,
Form'd to repel the ſtill or ſtormy waſte
Of rolling ages, light as fabrics look'd
That from the magic wand aerial riſe.

THESE were the wonders that illumin'd Greece,
From end to end —— Here interrupting warm,
Where are they now? (I cry'd) ſay, Goddeſs, where?
And what the land thy darling thus of old?
Sunk! ſhe reſum'd, deep in the kindred gloom
Of Superſtition, and of Slavery, ſunk!
No glory now can touch their hearts, benumb'd
By looſe dejected ſloth, and ſervile fear;
No ſcience pierce the darkneſs of their minds;
No nobler art the quick ambitious ſoul
Of imitation in their breaſt awake.
Even, to ſupply the needful arts of life,
Mechanic toil defies the hopeleſs hand.
Scarce any trace remaining, veſtige grey,
Or nodding column on the deſart ſhore,
To point where Corinth, or where Athens ſtood.
A faithleſs land of violence, and death!
Where commerce wanders, dubious, on the ſhore;
And the wild impulſe curious ſearch reſtrains,

Afraid

Afraid to truſt th' inhoſpitable clime.
Neglected nature fails; in ſordid want
Sunk, and debas'd, their beauty beams no more.
The Sun himſelf ſeems angry, to regard,
Of light unworthy, the degenerate race;
And fires them oft with peſtilential rays:
While earth, blue poiſon ſteaming on the ſkies,
Indignant, ſhakes them from her troubled ſides.
But as from man to man, Fate's firſt decree,
Impartial Death the tide of riches rolls,
So ſtates muſt die and LIBERTY go round.

FIERCE was the ſtand, ere Virtue, Valour, Arts,
And the Soul fir'd by Me (that often, ſtung
With thoughts of better times and old renown,
From hydra-tyrants try'd to clear the land)
Lay quite extinct in Greece, their works effac'd,
And groſs o'er all unfeeling bondage ſpread.
Sooner I mov'd my much reluctant flight,
Pois'd on the doubtful wing: when Greece with Greece
Embroil'd in foul contention, fought no more
For common glory, and for common weal:
But, falſe to Freedom, fought to quell the Free;
Broke the firm band of Peace, and ſacred Love,
That lent the whole irreſiſtible force;
And, as around the parted [illegible]
Prepar'd the way for [illegible]
Then to the Perſian power, whole [illegible]
When Xerxes pour'd his millions o'er the land,
Sparta, by turns, and Athens, [illegible] Sue'd

Sue'd

Sue'd to be venal parricides, to ſpill
Their country's braveſt blood, and on themſelves
To turn their matchleſs mercenary arms.
Peaceful in Suſa, then, ſat the * Great King;
And by the trick of treaties, the ſtill waſte
Of ſly corruption, and barbaric gold,
Effected what his ſteel could ne'er perform.
Profuſe he gave them the luxurious draught,
Inflaming all the land: unballanc'd wide
Their tottering ſtates; their wild aſſemblies rul'd,
As the winds turn at every blaſt the ſeas!
And by their liſted orators, whoſe breath,
Still with a factious ſtorm infeſted Greece,
Rous'd them to civil war, or daſh'd them down
To ſordid peace—† Peace! that when Sparta ſhook
Aſtoniſh'd Artaxerxes on his throne,
Gave up, fair-ſpread o'er Aſia's ſunny ſhore,
Their kindred-cities to perpetual chains.
What could ſo baſe, ſo infamous a thought
In Spartan hearts inſpire? Jealous, they ſaw
Reſpiring † Athens rear again her walls;
And the pale fury fir'd them once again
To cruſh this rival city to the duſt.

* So the kings of Persia were called by the Greeks.

† The peace made by Antalcidas the Lacedemonian admiral, with the Persians, by which the Lacedemonians abandoned all the Greeks established in the lesser Asia to the dominion of the king of Persia.

‡ Athens had been demolished by the Lacedemonians, at the end of the Peloponnesian wars, and was at this time restored by Conon to its former splendour.

For now no more the noble ſocial ſoul
Of LIBERTY my Families combin'd;
But by ſhort views, and ſelfiſh paſſions, broke,
Dire as when friends are rankled into foes,
They mix'd ſevere, and wage'd eternal war:
Nor felt they, furious, their exhauſted force;
Nor, with falſe glory, diſcord, madneſs blind,
Saw how the blackening ſtorm from Thracia came.
* Long years roll'd on, by many a battle ſtain'd,
The luſh and boaſt of Fame! where courage, art,
And military glory ſhone ſupreme:
But let deteſting ages, from the ſcene
Of Greece ſelf-mangled, turn the ſickening eye.
At laſt, when bleeding from a thouſand wounds,
She felt her ſpirits fail; and in the duſt
Her lateſt heroes, Nicias, Conon, lay,
Ageſilaus, and the † Theban Friends:
The Macedonian vulture mark'd his time,
By the dire ſcent of ‡ Cheronæa lur'd,
And, fierce-deſcending, ſeiz'd his hapleſs prey.

THUS tame ſubmitted to the victor's yoke
Greece, once the gay, the turbulent, the bold;
Lear every grace, and muſic, and ſcience born;
With arts of War, of Government, elate;
To Tyrants dreadful, dreadful to the Reſt;

* The Peloponneſian war.
† Pelopidas, and Epaminondas.
‡ The battle of Cheronæa, by which Philip of Macedon entirely deſtroyed the Grecian

Whom I MYSELF could ſcarcely rule: and thus
The Perſian fetters that inthrall'd the mind,
Were turn'd to formal and apparent chains.

UNLESS Corruption firſt deject the pride,
And guardian vigour of the free-born ſoul,
All crude attempts of Violence are vain;
For [illegible] within, and while at heart untouch'd,
No firm [illegible] by Force was Freedom overcome
[illegible]'er ye[illegible]n as Independence ſlumps the head,
But ſo[illegible]ce enſlav'd, and Vice-created Wants;
To V[illegible] to ſome [illegible] rupting Hand, whoſe waſte
There [illegible] eigh[illegible] foul-cor[illegible] with fatal bounty feeds:
There heighten'd wants [illegible]ning ruin runs,
From man to man the ſlacke[illegible] in Slavery ſinks.
Till the whole State unnerv'd

ROME:

Being the THIRD PART of

LIBERTY,

A

POEM.

The CONTENTS of PART III.

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LIBERTY.

PART III.

HERE melting mix'd with air th' ideal forms,
That painted ſtill whate'er the Goddeſs ſung.
Then I, impatient.—"From extinguiſh'd Greece,
"To what new region ſtream'd the Human Day?"
She ſoftly ſighing, as when Zephyr leaves,
Reſign'd to Boreas, the declining year,
Reſum'd.—Indignant, theſe * laſt ſcenes I fled;
And long ere then, Leucadia's cloudy cliff,
And the Ceraunian hills behind me thrown,
All Latium ſtood arous'd. Ages before,
Great mother of republics! Greece had pour'd,
Swarm after ſwarm, her ardent youth around.
On Aſia, Afric, Sicily, they ſtoop'd,
But chief on fair Hetruria's winding ſhore;
Where

* The laſt ſtruggles of Liberty in Greece.

Where, from * Lacinium to Etrurian vales,
They roll'd increaſing colonies along,
And lent materials for my Roman Reign,
With them my Spirit ſpread; and numerous ſtates
And cities roſe, on Grecian models form'd;
As its parental policy, and arts,
Each had imbib'd. Beſides, to each aſſign'd
A Guardian Genius, o'er the public weal,
Kept an uncloſing eye; try'd to ſuſtain,
Or more ſublime, the ſoul infus'd by Me:
And ſtrong the battle roſe, with various wave,
Againſt the Tyrant Demons of the land.
Thus they their little wars and triumphs knew;
Their flows of fortune, and receding times,
But almoſt all below the proud regard
Of ſtory vow'd to Rome, on deeds intent,
That Truth beyond the flight of Fable bore.

NOT ſo the † Samian Sage; to him belongs
The brighteſt witneſs of recording Fame.
For theſe free ſtates his native ‡ iſle forſook,
And a vain tyrant's tranſitory ſmile,
He fought Crotona's pure ſalubrious air,
And thro' § Great Greece his gentle wiſdom taught;
Wiſdom

* A promontory in Calabria.
† Pythagoras.
‡ Samos, over which then reigned the tyrant Polycrates.
§ The ſouthern parts of Italy and Sicily, ſo call'd because of the Grecian colonies there ſettled.

Wiſdom that calm'd for * liſtening years the mind,
Nor ever heard amid the ſtorm of zeal.
His mental eye firſt launch'd into the deeps
Of boundleſs æther; where unnumber'd orbs,
Myriads on myriads, thro' the pathleſs ſky
Unerring roll, and wind their ſteady way.
There he the full conſenting choir beheld;
There firſt diſcern'd the ſecret band of love
The kind attraction, that to central ſuns
Binds circling earths, and world with world unites.
Inſtructed thence, he great ideas form'd
Of the whole-moving, all-informing GOD,
The Sun of beings! beaming unconfin'd
Light, life, and love, and ever-active power:
Whom nought can image, and who beſt approves
The ſilent worſhip of the moral heart,
That joys in bounteous heaven, and ſpreads the joy.
Nor ſcorn'd the ſoaring ſage to ſtoop to life,
And bound his reaſon to the ſphere of Man.
He gave the four yet † reigning virtues name;
Inſpir'd the ſtudy of the finer arts,
That civilize mankind, and laws deviſ'd
Where with enlighten'd juſtice mercy mix'd.
He even, into his tender ſyſtem, took
Whatever ſhares the brotherhood of life:
He taught that life's indiſſoluble flame,
From brute to man, and man to brute again,
For ever ſhifting, runs th' eternal round;
Thence try'd a-gainſt the blood-polluted meal,

And

* His ſcholars were enjoin'd ſilence for five years.
† The four cardinal virtues.

And limbs yet quivering with ſome kindred ſoul,
To turn the human heart. Delightful truth!
Had he beheld the living chain aſcend,
And not a circling Form but riſing Whole.

Amid theſe ſmall republics one aroſe,
On yellow Tyber's bank, almighty Rome,
Fated for Me. A nobler ſpirit warm'd
Her ſons; and, rous'd by tyrants, nobler ſtill
It burn'd in Brutus; the proud Tarquins chas'd,
With all their crimes; bade radiant æras riſe,
And the long honours of the Conſul-Line.

Here from the fairer, not the greater, plan
Of Greece I vary'd; whoſe unmixing ſtates,
By the keen ſoul of emulation pierc'd,
Long wage'd alone the bloodleſs war of arts,
And their beſt empire gain'd. But to diffuſe
O'er Men an empire was my purpoſe now:
To let my martial Majeſty abroad;
Into the vortex of one State to draw
The whole mix'd Force, and Liberty on earth;
To conquer Tyrants, and ſet Nations free.

Already have I given, with flying touch,
A [illegible] view of this my ampleſt reign.
[illegible] while its firſt, laſt, periods you ſurvey,
[illegible] how it lab'ring roſe, and rapid fell.

When Rome in noon-tide empire gra[illegible] the world,

And

And, ſoon as her reſiſtleſs legions ſhone,
The nations ſtoop'd around; tho' then appear'd
Her grandeur moſt, yet in her dawn of power,
By many a jealous equal people preſs'd,
Then was the toil, the mighty ſtruggle then;
Then for each Roman I an Hero told;
And every paſſing ſun, and Latian ſcene,
Saw patriot virtues then, and awful deeds,
That, or ſurpaſs the faith of modern times,
Or, if believ'd, with ſacred horror ſtrike.

For then, to prove my moſt exalted power,
I to the point of full perfection puſh'd,
To fondneſs and enthuſiaſtic zeal,
The great, the reigning paſſion of the Free.
That godlike paſſion! which the bounds of Self
Divinely burſting, the whole public takes
Into the heart, enlarg'd, and burning high
With the mix'd ardor of unnumber'd Selves;
Of all who ſafe beneath the Voted Laws
Of the ſame parent-ſtate, fraternal, live.
From this kind Sun of Moral Nature flow'd
Virtues that ſhine the light of human-kind,
And, ray'd thro' ſtory, warm remoteſt time.
Theſe virtues too, reflected to their ſource,
Increas'd its flame. The ſocial charm went round,
The fair idea, more attractive ſtill,
[illegible] by Virtue mark'd; till Romans, all
[illegible] band of friends, unconquer'd grew.

Hence,

HENCE, when their country rais'd her plaintive voice,
The voice of pleading Nature was not heard;
And in their hearts the fathers throbb'd no more:
Stern to themſelves, but gentle to the whole.
Hence ſweetened Pain, the luxury of Toil;
Patience that baffled Fortune's utmoſt rage;
High-minded Hope, which at the loweſt ebb,
When Brennus conquer'd, and when Cannæ bled,
The braveſt impulſe felt, and ſcorn'd deſpair.
Hence Moderation, a new conqueſt gain'd;
As on the vanquiſh'd, like deſcending heaven,
Their dewy mercy dropt, their bounty beam'd,
And by the labouring hand were crowns beſtow'd.
Fruitful of men, hence hard laborious life,
Which no fatigue can quell, no ſeaſon pierce,
Hence, INDEPENDENCE, with his Little pleas'd
Serene, and ſelf-ſufficient, like a God;
In whom CORRUPTION could not lodge one charm,
While he his hopeſt Roots to Gold preferr'd
While truly rich, and by his Sabine field,
The man maintain'd, the Roman's ſplendor all
Was in the public wealth and glory plac'd:
Or ready, a rough ſwain, to guide the plough;
Or elſe, the purple o'er his ſhoulder thrown,
In long majeſtic flow, to rule the ſtate,
With Wiſdom's pureſt eye; or, clad in ſteel,
To drive the ſteady battle on the foe;
Hence every paſſion, even the proudeſt, ſtoop'd,
To common-good; Camillus, thy ſevere
Thy glory, Fabius, [illegible]

Consuls, Dictators, still resign'd their rule,
The very moment that the laws ordain'd.
Tho' Conquest o'er them clap'd her eagle-wings,
Her laurels wreath'd, and yok'd her snowy steeds
To the triumphal car; soon as expir'd
The latest hour of sway, taught to submit,
(A harder lesson that than to command)
Into the private Roman sunk the Chief.
If Rome was serv'd, and glorious, careless they
By whom. Their country's fame they deem'd their
own;
And above envy, in a rival's train,
Sung the loud Iös by themselves deserv'd.
Hence matchless courage. On Cremera's bank,
Hence fell the Fabii; hence the Decii dy'd;
And Curtius plung'd into the flaming gulf.
Hence Regulus the wavering fathers firm'd,
By dreadful counsel never given before;
For Roman honour sue'd, and his own doom,
Hence he sustain'd to dare a death prepar'd
By Punic rage. On earth his manly look
Relentless fix'd, he from a last embrace,
By chains polluted, put his wife aside,
His little children climbing for a kiss;
Then dumb thro' rows of weeping wond'ring friends,
A new illustrious exile! press'd along.
Not less impatient did he pierce the crouds
Opposing his return, than if, escap'd
From long litigious suits, he glad forsook
The noisy town a while and city-cloud,
To breathe Vaccarius, or Tarentine air.

Need I theſe high particulars recount?
The meaneſt boſom felt a thirſt for fame;
Flight their worſt death, and ſhame their only fear.
Life had no charms, nor any terrors Fate,
When Rome and Glory call'd. But, in one view,
Mark the rare boaſt of theſe unequall'd times.
Ages revolv'd unſully'd by a crime:
Aſtrea reign'd, and ſcarcely needed laws
To bind a race elated with the pride
Of virtue, and diſdaining to deſcend
To meanneſs, mutual violence, and wrongs.
While war around them rag'd, in happy Rome
All peaceful ſmil'd, all ſave the paſſing clouds
That often hang on Freedom's jealous brow;
And fair unblemiſh'd centuries elaps'd,
When not a Roman bled but in the field.
Their virtue ſuch, that an unballanc'd ſtate,
Still between Noble and Plebeian toſt,
As flow'd the wave of fluctuating power,
Was then kept firm, and with triumphant prow
Rode out the ſtorms. Oft tho' the mutive feuds,
That from the firſt their conſtitution ſhook,
(A latent ruin, growing as it grew)
Stood on the threatening point of civil war
Ready to ruſh: yet could the lenient voice
Of wiſdom, ſoothing the tumultuous ſoul
Thoſe ſons of virtue calm. Their generous hearts,
Unpetrify'd by Self, ſo naked lay
And ſenſible to truth, that o'er the rage
Of giddy faction, by oppreſſion ſwell'd,
Prevail'd a ſimple fable, and a word
To

To peace recover'd the divided ſtate.
But if their often cheated hopes refus'd
The ſoothing touch; ſtill, in the love of Rome,
The dread Dictator found a ſure reſource.
Was ſhe aſſaulted? was her glory ſtain'd?
One common quarrel wide inflam'd the whole.
Foes in the Forum, in the field were friends,
By ſocial danger bound; each fond of each,
And for their deareſt country all, to die.

Thus up the hill of empire ſlow they toil'd:
Till, the bold ſummit gain'd, the thouſand ſtates
Of proud Italia blended into one;
Then o'er the nations they reſiſtleſs ruſh'd,
And touch'd the limits of the falling world.

Let Fancy's eye the diſtant lines unite.
See that which borders wild the weſtern main,
Where ſtorms at large reſound, and tides immenſe:
From Caledonia's dim cærulean coaſt,
And moiſt Hibernia, to where Atlas lodg'd
Amid the reſtleſs clouds, and leaning heaven
Hangs o'er the deep that borrows thence its name.
Mark that oppos'd, where firſt the ſpreading morn
Her roſes ſheds, and ſhakes around her dews:
From the dire deſerts by the Caſpian lav'd,
To where the Tigris and Euphrates join'd,
Impetuous tear the Babylonian plains,
And bleſt Arabia aromatic breathes.
See that dividing far the wat'ry north,
Pave of floods! from the majeſtic Rhine,

Drunk by Batavian meads, to where, ſeven-mouth'd,
In Euxine waves the flaſhing Danube roars;
To where the frozen Tanais ſcarcely ſtirs
The dead Meotic pool, or the long * Rha,
In the black † Scythian ſea his torrent throws.
Eaſt, that beneath the burning zone behold.
See where it runs, from the deep-loaded plains
Of Mauritania to the Lybian ſands,
Where Ammon lifts amid the torrid waſte
A verdant iſle, with ſhade and fountain freſh;
And farther to the full Egyptian ſhore,
To where the Nile from Ethiopian clouds,
His never-drain'd ethereal urn, deſcends.
In this vaſt ſpace what various tongues, and ſtates!
What bounding rocks, and mountains, floods, and
ſeas!
What purple tyrants quell'd, and nations freed!

O'ER Greece deſcended chief, with ſtealth divine,
The Roman bounty in a flood of day:
As at her Iſthmian games, a fading pomp!
Her full-aſſembled youth innumerous ſwarm'd.
On a tribunal rais'd Flaminius ſat;
A victor he, from the deep phalanx pierc'd
Of iron-coated Macedon, and back
The Grecian † tyrant to his bounds repell'd.
In the high thoughtleſs gaiety of game,
While ſport alone their unambitious hearts

Poſ-

* The ancient name of the Volga.
† The Caſpian ſea.
‡ The Macedonic.

Poſſeſs'd; the ſudden trumpet ſounding hoarſe,
Bade ſilence o'er the bright aſſembly reign.
Then thus a herald:——"To the ſtates of Greece,
"The Roman People, unconfin'd reſtore
"Their countries, cities, liberties, and laws:
"Taxes remit, and garriſons withdraw."
The croud aſtoniſh'd half, and half inform'd,
Star'd dubious round; ſome queſtion'd, ſome exclaim'd,
(Like one who dreaming, between hope and fear,
Is loſt in anxious joy) Be that again,
Be that again proclaim'd, diſtinct, and loud.
Loud, and diſtinct, it was again proclaim'd;
And ſtill as midnight in the rural ſhade,
When the gale ſlumbers, they the words devour'd.
A while ſevere amazement held them mute,
Then, burſting broad, the boundleſs ſhout to heaven
From many a thouſand hearts extatic ſprung.
On every hand rebellow'd to their joy
The ſwelling ſea, the rocks, and vocal hills:
Thro' all her turrets ſtately * Corinth ſhook;
And, from the void above of ſhatter'd air,
The flitting bird fell breathleſs to the ground.
What piercing bliſs! how keen a ſenſe of fame,
Did then, Flaminius, reach thy inmoſt ſoul?
And with what deep-felt glory didſt thou then
Eſcape the fondneſs of tranſported Greece?
Mix'd in the tempeſt of ſuperior joy,
They left the ſports; like Bacchanals they flew,
Each other graſping in a ſtrict embrace,

* The Iſthmian games were celebrated at Corinth.

Nor ſtrain'd a ſlave; and loud acclaims till night
Round the Proconſul's tent repeated rung.
Then, crown'd with garlands, came the feſtive hours;
And muſic, ſparkling wine, and converſe warm, 299
Their raptures wak'd anew.—"Ye Gods, they cry'd,
"Ye guardian Gods of Greece! And are we free!
"Was it not madneſs deem'd the very thought?
"And is it true! How did we purchaſe chains?
"At what a dire expence of kindred-blood?
"And are they now diſſolv'd? And ſcarce one drop
"For the fair firſt of bleſſings have we paid? 306
"Courage, and conduct, in the doubtful field;
"When rages wide the ſtorm of mingling war,
"Are rare indeed; but how to generous ends
"To turn ſucceſs, and conqueſt, rarer ſtill: 310
"That the great Gods and Romans only know.
"Lives there on earth, almoſt to Greece unknown,
"A people ſo magnanimous, to quit
"Their native ſoil, traverſe the ſtormy deep,
"And by their blood and treaſures, ſpent for us,
"Redeem our ſtates, our liberties, and laws! 316
"There does! there does! Oh Saviour Titus!
"Rome!"
Thus thro' the happy night they pour'd their ſouls,
And in my laſt reflected beams rejoic'd.
As when the ſhepherd, on the mountain-brow, 320
Sits piping to his flocks, and gameſome kids;
Meantime the ſun, beneath the green earth ſunk,
Shoots upward o'er the ſcene a parting gleam:
Shows all the glory that the mountain gilds,
Plays on the glittering flocks, and glads the ſwain;

To

To weſtern worlds irrevocable roll'd,
Rapid, the ſource of light recalls his ray.

HERE interpoſing I.—" Oh Queen of men!
" Beneath whoſe ſceptre in eſſential rights
" Equal they live; tho' plac'd for common good,
" Various, or in ſubjection or command;
" And that by common choice: alas! the ſcene,
" With virtue, freedom, and with glory bright,
" Streams into blood, and darkens into woe."
Thus SHE purſu'd—Near this great æra, Rome
Began to feel the ſwift approach of fate,
That now her vitals gain'd: ſtill more and more,
Her deep diviſions kindling into rage,
And war with chains and deſolation charg'd.
From an unequal ballance of her ſons
Theſe fierce contentions ſprung; and as increas'd
This hated inequality, more fierce
They flam'd to tumult. Independence fail'd;
Here by luxurious wants, by real there;
And with this virtue every virtue ſunk,
As, with the ſliding rock, the pile ſuſtain'd.
A laſt attempt, too late the Gracchi made,
To fix the flying ſcale, and poiſe the ſtate.
On one ſide ſwell'd Ariſtocratic Pride;
With Uſury, the Villain whoſe fell gripe
Bends by degrees to ſervitude the free ſoul.
And Luxury rapacious, cruel, mean,
Mother of vice! While on the other crept
A Populace in want, with pleaſure fir'd;
Fit for proſcriptions, for the darkeſt deeds,

As the proud feeder bade; inconſtant, blind,
Deſerting friends at need, and dupe'd by foes;
Loud and ſeditious, when a chief inſpir'd
Their headlong fury, but, of him depriv'd,
Already ſlaves that lick'd the ſcourging hand.

THIS firm Republic, that againſt the blaſt
Of oppoſition roſe; that (like an oak,
Nurs'd on feracious Algidum, whoſe boughs
Still ſtronger ſhoot beneath the rigid axe)
By loſs, by ſlaughter, from the ſteel itſelf,
Even force and ſpirit drew; ſmit with the calm,
The dead ſerene of proſperous fortune, pine'd.
Nought now her weighty legions could oppoſe;
Her * terror once, on Afric's tawny ſhore,
Now ſmok'd in duſt, a ſtabling now for wolves;
And every dreaded power receiv'd the yoke.
Beſides, deſtructive, from the conquer'd Eaſt,
In the ſoft plunder came that worſt of plagues,
That peſtilence of mind, a fever'd thirſt
For the falſe joys which Luxury prepares.
Unworthy joys! that waſteful leave behind
No mark of honour, in reflecting hour,
No ſecret ray to glad the conſcious ſoul;
At once involving in one ruin wealth,
And wealth-acquiring powers: While ſtupid Self,
Of narrow guſt, and hebetating ſenſe
Bevels the nobler faculties of bliſs.
Hence Roman virtue ſlacken'd into ſloth;

Security

* Carthage.

Security relax'd the ſoftening ſtate;
And the broad [illegible] of government lay clos'd,
No more the laws inviolable reign'd,
And public weal no more: but party rage'd;
And partial power, and licence unreſtrain'd,
Let Diſcord thro' the deathful city looſe.
Firſt, mild * Tiberius, on thy ſacred head
The Fury's vengeance fell; the firſt, whoſe blood
Had ſince the conſuls ſtain'd contending Rome.
Of precedent pernicious! With thee bled
Three hundred Romans; with thy brother, next,
Three thouſand more: till, into battles turn'd
Debates of peace, and forc'd the trembling laws,
The Forum and Comitia horrid grew,
A ſcene of barter'd power, or reeking gore.
When, half-aſham'd, Corruption's thieviſh Arts,
And ruffian Force began to ſap the mounds
And majeſty of laws; if not in time
Repreſs'd ſevere, for human aid too ſtrong
The torrent turns, and overbears the whole.

Thus Luxury, Diſſenſion, a mix'd rage
Of boundleſs Pleaſure and of boundleſs Wealth,
Want wiſhing Change, and Waſte repairing War,
Rapine for [illegible] oft to peaceful toil,
Guilt unaton'd, profuſe of blood Revenge,
Corruption all avow'd, and lawleſs Force,
Each heightening each, alternate ſhook the [illegible]
Mean time Ambition, [illegible]

* Tib. Gracchus.

Of hardy legions, with the lawleſs heap'd
And ſpoil of nations, in one ruining blaſt
Combin'd in various ſtorm, and from its baſe
The broad Republic tore. By Virtue built,
It touch'd the ſkies, and ſpread o'er ſhelter'd earth
An ample roof: by Virtue too ſuſtain'd,
And balanc'd ſteady, every tempeſt ſung
Innoxious by, or bade it firmer ſtand.
But when, with ſudden and enormous change,
The Firſt of mankind ſunk into the Laſt,
As once in Virtue, ſo in Vice extreme,
This univerſal fabric yielded looſe,
Before Ambition ſtill; and thundering down,
At laſt, beneath its ruins cruſh'd a world.

A conquering people, to themſelves a prey,
Muſt ever fall: when their victorious troops,
In blood and rapine ſavage grown, can find
No land to ſack and pillage but their own.

By brutal Marius, and keen Sylla, firſt
Effus'd the deluge dire of civil blood,
Unceaſing woes began, and this, or that,
(Deep-drenching their revenge) nor virtue ſpar'd,
Nor ſex, nor age, nor quality, nor name;
Till Rome, into an human ſhambles turn'd,
Made deſerts lovely.—Oh to well-earn'd chains
Devoted race!—If no [illegible] Roman [illegible]
No Scævola there was, to ruſh for [illegible]
A vengeful hand: was there no faithful, robb'd
Of bleeding youth to prop his withered age;
No ſon, a witneſs to his hoary fire

In

In duſt and gore defil'd? No friend, forlorn?
No wretch that doubtful trembled for himſelf?
None brave, or wild, to pierce a monſters heart,
Who, heaping horror round, no more deſerv'd
The ſacred ſhelter of the laws he ſpurn'd?
No. Sad o'er all, profound dejection ſat;
And nerveleſs fear. The ſlave's aſylum theirs:
Or flight, ill-judging, that the timid back
Turns weak to ſlaughter; or partaken guilt.
In vain from Sylla's vanity I drew
An unexampled deed. The power reſign'd,
And all unhop'd the commonwealth reſtor'd,
Amaz'd the public, and effac'd his crimes.
Thro' ſtreets yet ſtreaming from his murd'rous hand
Unarm'd he ſtray'd, unguarded, unaſſail'd,
And on the bed of peace his aſhes laid;
A grace, which I to his demiſſion gave,
But with him dy'd not the deſpotic ſoul.
Ambition ſaw that ſtooping Rome could bear
A Maſter, nor had virtue to be free.
Hence, for ſucceeding years, my troubled reign
No certain peace, no ſpreading proſpect knew.
Deſtruction gather'd round. Still the black ſoul,
Or of a Cataline, or * Rullus, ſwell'd
With fell deſigns; and all the watchful art
Of Cicero demanded, all the force,

All

* Pub. Servilius Rullus, tribune of the people, propoſed an Agrarian Law, [illegible] very advantageous for the people, but deſtructive of [illegible] liberty; and which was defeated by the eloquence of [illegible] in his ſpeech against Rullus.

All the ſtate wield'ing magic of his tongue;
And all the thunder of my Cato's zeal.
With theſe I linger'd; till the flame anew
Burſt out in blaze immenſe, and wrapt the world.
The ſhameful conteſt ſprung; to whom mankind
Should yield the neck; to Pompey, who conceal'd
A rage impatient of an equal name;
Or to the nobler Cæſar, on whoſe brow
O'er daring vice deluding virtue ſmil'd,
And who no leſs a vain ſuperior ſcorn'd.
Both bled, but bled in vain. New traitors roſe.
"The venal *will* be bought, the baſe have lords."
To theſe vile wars I left ambitious ſlaves;
And from Philippi's field, from where in duſt
The laſt of Romans, matchleſs Brutus! lay,
Spread to the north untam'd a rapid wing.

What tho' the firſt ſmooth Cæſars are careſs'd,
Merit, and virtue, ſimulating Me?
Severely tender! cruelly humane!
The chain to clinch, and make it ſofter fit
On the new-broken ſtill ferocious ſtate.
From the dark * Third, ſucceeding, I beheld
Th' imperial monſters all.—A race on earth
Vindictive, ſent the ſcourge of human-kind!
Whoſe blind profuſion drain'd a bankrupt world;
Whoſe luſt to forming nature ſcorns diſgrace,
And whoſe infernal rage bade every drop
Of [illegible] blood, [illegible] my flame,

* Tiberius.

To that of * Pætus in the peaceful bath,
Or Rome's affrighted ſtreets, inglorious flow.
But almoſt juſt the meanly-patient death,
That waits a tyrant's unprevented ſtroke.
Titus indeed gave one ſhort evening gleam;
More cordial felt, as in the midſt it ſpread
Of ſtorm and horror. The delight of men!
He who the day, when his o'erflowing hand
Had made no happy heart, concluded loſt;
Trajan and He, with the Mild † Sire and Son,
His ſon of virtue! eas'd awhile mankind;
And Arts reviv'd beneath their gentle beam.
Then was their laſt effort: What Sculpture rais'd
To Trajan's glory, following triumphs ſtole;
And mix'd with Gothic forms, (the chiſſels ſhame)
On that triumphal ‡ arch, the forms of Greece.

Meantime o'er rocky Thrace, and the deep vales
Of gelid Hæmus, I purſu'd my flight;
And, piercing fartheſt Scythia, weſtward ſwept
§ Sarmatia, travers'd by a thouſand ſtreams.

* Thraſea Pætus, put to death by Nero. Tacitus introduces the account he gives of his death thus,—"After having inhumanly "ſlaughter'd ſo many illuſtrious men, he (Nero) burned at "laſt with a deſire of cutting off virtue itſelf in the perſon of "Thraſea[illegible]."

† Antoninus Pius, and his adopted ſon Marcus Aurelius, afterwards called Antoninus [illegible].

‡ Conſtantine's arch, to build which ſome of Trajan was deſtroyed, Sculpture having been then almoſt entirely loſt.

§ The Sarmatia Aſiatica, containing a vaſt tract of country, running all along the north of Europe and Aſia.

A ſullen land of lakes, and fens immenſe,
Of rocks, reſounding torrents, gloomy heaths,
And cruel deſerts black with ſounding pine;
Where nature frowns: tho' ſometimes into ſmiles
She ſoftens; and immediate, at the touch
Of ſouthern gales, throws from the ſudden glebe
Luxuriant paſture, and a waſte of flowers.
But, cold-compreſt, when the whole-loaded heaven
Deſcends in ſnow, loſt in one white abrupt,
Lies undiſtinguiſh'd earth; and, ſeiz'd by froſt,
Lakes, headlong ſtreams, and floods, and oceans ſleep.
Yet there life glows; the furry millions there
Deep-dig their dens beneath the ſheltering ſnows:
And there a race of men prolific ſwarms,
To various pain, to little pleaſure us'd;
On whom, keen-parching, beat Riphæan winds;
Hard like their ſoil, and like their climate fierce,
The nurſery of nations!—Theſe I rous'd,
Drove land on land, on people people pour'd;
Till from almoſt perpetual night they broke,
As if in ſearch of day; and o'er the banks
Of yielding empire, only ſlave-ſuſtain'd,
Reſiſtleſs rag'd, in vengeance urg'd by Me.

Long in the barbarous heart the bury'd ſeeds
Of Freedom lay, for many a wint'ry age;
And tho' my ſpirit work'd, by ſlow degrees,
Nought but its pride and fierceneſs yet appear'd.
Then was the night of time, that parted worlds.
I quitted earth the while. As when the tribes
Aërial, warn'd of riſing winds, ride
Autumnal

Autumnal winds, to warmer climates borne;
So Arts, and each good Genius in my train,
I cut the closing gloom and soar'd to heaven.

In the bright regions there of purest day,
Far other scenes, and palaces, arise,
Adorn'd profuse with other arts divine.
All beauty here below, to them compar'd,
Would, like a rose before the mid-day sun,
Shrink up its blossom: like a bubble break
The passing poor magnificence of kings.
For there the King of Nature, in full blaze,
Calls every splendor forth; and there his court
Amid etherial powers, and virtues, holds:
Angel, archangel, tutelary gods,
Of cities, nations, empires, and of worlds.
But sacred be the veil, that kindly cloud
A light too keen for mortals; wraps a view
Too softening far, for those that here in dust
Must chearful toil out their appointed years.
A sense of higher life would only damp
The school-boy's task, and spoil his playful hours.
Nor could the child of Reason, feeble Man,
With vigour thro' this infant-being drudge;
Did brighter worlds, their unimagin'd bliss
Disclosing, dazzle and dissolve his mind.

BRITAIN:

Being the FOURTH PART of

LIBERTY,

A

POEM.

The CONTENTS of PART IV.

DIFFERENCE betwixt the Ancients and Moderns ſlightly touch'd upon, to Ver. 30. *Deſcription of the dark ages. The* GODDESS *of* LIBERTY, *who during theſe is ſuppoſed to have left earth, returns, attended with* ARTS *and* SCIENCE, *to* Ver. 100. *She firſt deſcends on Italy. Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture fix at Rome, to revive their ſeveral arts by the great models of antiquity there, which many barbarous invaſions had not been able to deſtroy. The revival of theſe arts marked out. That ſometimes arts may flouriſh for a while under deſpotic governments, tho' never the natural and genuine production of them, to* Ver. 254. *Learning begins to dawn. The Muſe and Science attend* LIBERTY, *who, in her progreſs towards Great Britain, raiſes ſeveral free ſtates and cities. Theſe enumerated, to* Ver. 381. *Author's exclamation of joy, upon ſeeing the Britiſh ſeas and coaſts riſe in the Viſion, which painted whatever the* GODDESS *of* LIBERTY *ſaid. She reſumes her narration. The Genius of the Deep appears, and, addreſſing* LIBERTY, *aſſociates Great Britain into his dominion, to* Ver. 451. LIBERTY *received and congratulated by Britannia, and the Native Genii or Virtues of the iſland. Theſe deſcribed. Animated by the preſence of* LIBERTY, *they begin their operations. Their benefcent influence contraſted with the works and deluſions of oppoſing Demons, to* Ver. 626. *Concludes with an abſtract of the Engliſh hiſtory, marking the ſeveral Advances of* LIBERTY, *down to the compleat eſtabliſhment at the Revolution.*

LIBERTY.

PART IV.

STRUCK with the rising scene, thus I amaz'd.
" Ah GODDESS, what a change! Is earth the
" same?
" Of the same kind the ruthless race she seeds?
" And does the same fair sun, and ether spread
" Round this vile spot their all-enlivening soul!
" Lo! beauty fails; lost in unlovely forms
" Of little pomp, magnificence no more
" Exalts the mind, and bids the public smile:
" While to rapacious interest Glory leave
" Mankind, and every grace of life is gone."

[illegible]
[illegible]

" Of Gothic darkneſs ſprings another day.
" True, Genius droops; the tender ancient taſte
" Of Beauty, then freſh-blooming in her prime,
" But faintly trembles thro' the callous ſoul;
" And Grandeur, or of morals, or of life,
" Sinks into falſe purſuits, and creeping cares.
" Even cautious Virtue ſeems to ſtop her flight,
" And aged Life to deem the generous deeds
" Of youth romantic. Yet in cooler thought
" Well reaſon'd, in reſearches piercing deep
" Thro' nature's works, in profitable arts,
" And all that calm Experience can diſcloſe,
" (Slow guide, but ſure) behold the world anew
" Exalted riſe, with other honours crown'd;
" And, where My Spirit wakes the finer powers,
" Athenian laurels ſtill afreſh ſhall bloom."

Oblivious ages paſs'd; while earth forſook
By her beſt Genii, lay to Demons foul,
And unchain'd Furies, an abandon'd prey.
Contention led the van; firſt ſmall of ſize,
But ſoon dilating to the ſkies ſhe tow'rs:
Then, wide as air, the livid Fury ſpread,
And high her head above the ſtormy clouds,
She blaz'd in omens, ſwell'd the groaning winds,
With wild ſurmiſes, battlings, ſounds of war:
From land to land the mad'ning trumpet blew,
And pour'd her venom thro' the heart of man.
ſhook to the pole, the North obey'd her call.
Forth ruſh'd the bloody Power of Gothic War,
War againſt human-kind: Rapine, that led
Millions

Millions of raging robbers in his train:
Unlift'ning, barbarous Force, to whom the ſword
Is reaſon, honour, law: the Foe of Arts
By monſters follow'd, hideous to behold,
That claim'd their place. Outrageous mix'd with theſe
Another ſpecies of * tyrannic rule,
Unknown before, whoſe cancrous ſhackles ſeiz'd
Th' envenom'd ſoul; a wilder Fury, She
Even o'er her † Elder Siſter tyranniz'd;
Or, if perchance agreed, inflam'd her rage.
Dire was her train, and loud: the Sable Band,
Thundering,--"Submit, ye Laity! Ye prophane!
"Earth is the Lord's, and therefore Ours; let kings
"Allow the common claim, and half be theirs;
"If not, behold! the ſacred light'ning flies:"
Scholaſtic Diſcord, with an hundred tongues,
For ſcience uttering jangling words obſcure,
Where frighted Reaſon never yet could dwell:
Of peremptory feature, Cleric Pride,
Whoſe reddening cheek no contradiction bears;
And Holy Slander, his aſſociate ſtern,
On whom the Lying Spirit ſtill deſcends:
Mother of tortures! Perſecuting Zeal,
High-flaſhing in her hand the ready torch,
Or poinard bath'd in unbelieving blood;
Hell's fierceſt fiend! Of ſaintly brow demure,
Aſſuming a celeſtial ſeraph's name,
While the beneath the blaſphemous pretence

* Church-power, or prieſtly ſpiritual tyranny.
† Civil tyranny.

Of pleaſing Parent Heaven, the Source of Love!
Has wrought more horrors, more deteſted deeds,
Than all the reſt combin'd. Led on by her,
And wild of head to work her fell deſigns,
Came idiot Superſtition; round with cars
Innumerous ſtrow'd, ten thouſand monkiſh forms
With legends ply'd them, and with tenets, meant
To charm or ſcare the ſimple into ſlaves,
And poiſon Reaſon; groſs, She ſwallows all,
The moſt abſurd believing ever moſt.
Broad o'er the whole her univerſal night,
The gloom ſtill doubling, Ignorance diffus'd.

Nought to be ſeen, but viſionary monks
To councils ſtrolling, and embroiling creeds;
* Banditti Saints, diſturbing diſtant lands;
And unknown nations, wandering for a home.
All lay revers'd: the ſacred arts of rule
Turn'd to flagitious leagues againſt mankind,
And arts of plunder more and more avow'd;
† Pure plain Devotion to a ſolemn farce;
To holy dotage Virtue, even to guile,
To murder, and a mockery of oaths;
Brave ancient Freedom to the ‡ Rage of Slaves,
Proud of their ſtate, and fighting for their chains;
Diſhonour'd Courage to the § Bravo's trade,
To civil broil, and Glory to romance.

Thus

* Cruſaders.

† The corruptions of the Church of Rome.

‡ [illegible] the attachment of [illegible]

Thus human life unhing'd to ruin reel'd,
And giddy Reaſon totter'd on her throne.

At laſt Heaven's beſt inexplicable ſcheme,
Diſcloſing, bade new bright'ning eras ſmile.
The high command gone forth, Arts in my train,
And azure-mantled Science, ſwift We ſpread
A ſounding pinion. Eager pity, mixt
With indignation, urg'd her downward flight.
On Latium firſt we ſtoop'd, for doubtful life
That panted, ſunk beneath unnumber'd woes.
Ah poor Italia! what a bitter cup
Of vengeance haſt thou drain'd? Goths, Vandals, Huns,
Lombards, barbarians broke from every land,
How many a ruffian form haſt thou beheld?
What horrid jargons heard, where rage alone
Was all the frighted ear could comprehend?
How frequent by the red inhuman hand,
Yet warm with brother's, huſband's, father's blood,
Haſt thou thy matrons and thy virgins ſeen
To violation dragg'd, and mingled death?
What conflagrations, earthquakes, ravage, floods,
Have turn'd thy cities into ſtony wilds;
And ſuccourleſs, and bare, the poor remains
Of wretches forth to nature's common caſt?
Added to theſe, the ſtill continued waſte
Of * inbred foes, that on thy vitals prey,
And, double tyrants, ſeize the very ſoul.
Where hadſt thou treaſures for this rapine all?

These

* The [illegible]

These hungry myriads, that thy bowels tore,
Heap'd sack on sack, and bury'd in their rage
Wonders of art; whence this grey scene a mine
Of more than gold becomes and orient gems,
Where Egypt, Greece, and Rome, united glow.

HERE Sculpture, Painting, Architecture, bent
From ancient models to restore their arts,
Remain'd. A little trace we how they rose.

AMID the hoary ruins Sculpture first,
Deep-digging, from the cavern dark and damp,
Their grave for ages, bid her marble race
Spring to new light. Joy sparkled in her eyes,
And old remembrance thrill'd in every thought,
As she the pleasing resurrection saw.
In leaning ute, respiring from his toils,
The well-known † Hero, who delivered Greece,
His ample chest, all tempested with force,
Unconquerable rear'd. She saw the head,
Breathing the hero, small, of Grecian size,
Scarce more extensive than the sinewy neck;
The spreading shoulders, muscular, and broad;
The whole a mass of swelling sinews, touch'd
Into harmonious shape; she saw, and joy'd.
The yellow hunter, Maleager, rais'd
His beauteous front, and thro' the finish'd whole
Shows what ideas smil'd of old in Greece.
Of raging aspect, rush'd impetuous forth

The

† The Hercules of Farnese.

The * Gladiator. Pitylefs his look,
And each keen ſinew brac'd, the ſtorm of war,
Ruffling, o'er all his nervous body frowns.
The † Dying Other from the gloom ſhe drew.
Supported on his ſhortened arm he leans,
Prone, agonizing; with incumbent face,
Heavy declines his head; yet dark beneath
The ſuffering feature ſullen vengeance lours,
Shame, indignation, unaccompliſh'd rage,
And ſtill the cheated eye expects his fall.
All conqueſt-flufh'd, from proſtrate Python, came
The ‡ Quivered God. In graceful act he ſtands,
His arm extended with the ſlackened bow.
Light flows his eaſy robe, and fair diſplays
A manly-ſoften'd form. The bloom of Gods
Seems youthful o'er the beardleſs cheek to wave.
His features yet heroic ardor warms;
And ſweet ſubſiding to a native ſmile,
Mixt with the joy elating conqueſt gives,
A ſcatter'd frown exalts his matchleſs air.
On Flora mov'd; her full-proportion'd limbs
Riſe thro' the mantle fluttering in the breeze.
The § Queen of Love aroſe, as from the deep
She ſprung in all the melting pomp of charms.
Bafhful ſhe bends, her well-taught look aſide
Turns in enchanting guiſe, where dubious mix
Vein conſcious beauty, a diſſembled ſcorn

* The Fighting Gladiator. † The Dying Gladiator.
‡ The Apollo di Belvidere.
§ The Venus de Medicis.

Of modeſt ſhame, and ſlippery looks of love.
The gazer grows enamour'd, and the ſtone,
As if exulting in its conqueſt, ſmiles.
So turn'd each limb, ſo ſwell'd with ſoftening art,
That the deluded eye the marble doubts.
At laſt her utmoſt † Maſterpiece ſhe found,
That † Maro fir'd; the miſerable ſire,
Wrapt with his ſons in fate's ſevereſt graſp.
The ſerpents, twiſting round, their ſtringent folds
Inextricable tie. Such paſſion here,
Such agonies, ſuch bitterneſs of pain,
Seem ſo to tremble thro' the tortur'd ſtone,
That the touch'd heart engroſſes all the view.
Almoſt unmark'd the beſt proportions paſs,
That ever Greece beheld; and, ſeen alone,
On the rapt eye th' imperious paſſions ſeize:
The father's double pangs, both for himſelf
And ſons convulſ'd; to Heaven his rueful look,
Imploring aid, and half-accuſing, caſt;
His ſelf deſpair with indignation mixt,
As the ſtrong curling monſters from his ſide
The full extended fury cannot tear.
More tender touch'd, with varied art, his ſons
All the ſoft rage of younger paſſions ſhow.
In a boy's helpleſs fate one ſinks oppreſs'd;
While, yet unpierc'd, the frighted other tries
His foot to ſteal out of the horrid twine.

† The groupe of Laocoon and his two ſons, deſtroyed by two ſerpents.

‡ See Virgil, lib. viii. ver. 280 to 305.

SHE bore no more, but strait from Gothic rust
Her chissel clear'd, and * dust and fragments drove
Impetuous round. Successive as it went
From son to son, with more enlivening touch,
From the brute-rock it call'd the breathing form;
Till, in a legislator's awful grace
Drest, Buonarti bid a Moses rise,
And, looking love immense, a † Saviour-God.

OF These observant, Painting felt the fire
Burn inward. Then extatic she diffus'd
The canvass, seiz'd the pallet, with quick hand
The colours brew'd; and on the void expanse
Her gay creation pour'd, her mimic world.
Poor was the manner of her eldest race,
Barren, and dry; just struggling from the taste,
That had for ages scar'd in cloisters dim
The superstitious herd: yet glorious then
Were deem'd their works; where undevelop'd lay
The future wonders that enrich'd mankind,
And a new light and grace o'er Europe cast.
Arts gradual gather streams. Enlarging This
To each his portion of her various gifts
The Goddess dealt, to none indulging all;
No, not to Raphael. At kind distance still
Perfection stands, like Happiness, to tempt

* It is reported of Michael Angelo Buonaroti, the most celebrated master of modern sculpture, that he wrought with a kind of inspiration, or enthusiastic fury, which produced the effect here mentioned.

† Esteemed the two finest pieces of modern sculpture.

Th' eternal chace. In elegant design
Improving nature; in ideas fair,
Or great, extracted from the fine antique;
In attitude, expression, airs divine;
Her sons of Rome and Florence bore the prize.
To those of Venice she the magic art
Of colours melting into colours gave.
Theirs too it was by one embracing mass
Of light and shade, that settles round the whole,
Or varies tremulous from part to part,
O'er all a binding harmony to throw,
To raise the picture, and repose the sight.
The * Lombard school succeeding, mingled both.

MEAN-TIME dread Fanes, and Palaces, around,
Rear'd the magnific front. Music again
Her universal language of the heart
Renew'd; and, rising from the plaintive vale,
To the full concert spread, and solemn quire.

EVEN bigots smil'd; to their protection took
Arts not their own, and from them borrow'd pomp:
For in a Tyrant's garden these awhile
May bloom, tho' Freedom be their parent soil.

AND now confest, with gently-growing gleam,
The morning shone, and westward stream'd its light.
The Muse awoke. Not sooner on the wing
is the gay bird of dawn. Restless her voice,

Un-

* The school of the Caracci.

Untaught and wild, yet warbling thro' the woods
Romantic lays. But as her northern course
She, with her tutor Science, in My train,
Ardent pursu'd, her strains more noble grew:
While Reason drew the plan, the Heart inform'd
The moral page, and Fancy lent it grace.

ROME and her circling deserts cast behind,
I pass'd not idle to my great sojourn.

ON * Arno's fertile plain, where the rich vine
Luxuriant o'er Etrurian mountains roves,
Safe in the lap repos'd of private bliss,
I † small republics rais'd. Thrice happy they!
Had social Freedom bound their Peace, and Arts,
Instead of ruling Power, ne'er meant for them,
Employ'd their little cares, and sav'd their fate.

Beyond the rugged Apennines, that roll
Far thro' Italian bounds their weavy tops,
My path too I with public blessings strow'd:
Free states and cities, where the Lombard plain,
In spite of culture negligent and gross,
From her deep bosom pours unbidden joys,
And green o'er all the land a garden spreads.

* The river Arno runs through Florence.

† The republics of Florence, Pisa, Lucca, and Siena. They formerly have had [illegible] wars together, but are now all peaceably subject to the Great Duke of Tuscany, except it be Lucca, which still maintains the form of a republic.

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The barren rocks themselves beneath My Foot,
Relenting bloom'd on the Ligurian shore.
‡ Thick-swarming people there, like emmets, seiz'd
Amid surrounding cliffs the scatter'd spots,
Which Nature left in her ‖ destroying rage,
Made their own fields, nor sigh'd for other lands.
There, in white prospect, from the rocky hill
Gradual descending to the shelter'd shore,
By Me proud Genoa's marble turrets rose.
And while My genuine Spirit warm'd her sons,
Beneath her Dorias, not unworthy, she
Vy'd for the trident of the narrow seas,
Ere Britain yet had opened all the main.

Nor be the then * triumphant state forgot;
Where †, push'd from plunder'd earth, a remnant still,
Inspir'd by Me, thro' the dark ages kept
Of My old Roman flame some sparks alive:
The seeming god-built city! which My hand
Deep

‡ The Genoese territory is reckoned very populous, but the towns and villages for the most part lie hid among the Apennine rocks and mountains.

‖ According to Dr Burnet's system of the deluge.

* Venice was the most flourishing city in Europe, with regard to trade, before the passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, and America were discovered.

† Those who fled to some marshes in the Adriatic gulf, [illegible] desolation spread over Italy by an irruption of the Huns, first [illegible] this famous city, about the beginning of the [illegible] century.

Deep in the boſom ſix'd of wondering ſeas.
Aſto[illegible]ſh'd mortals ſail'd, with pleaſing awe,
Ar[illegible]d the ſea-girt valls, by Neptune fenc'd,
And down the briny ſtreet; where on each hand,
Amazing ſeen amid unſtable waves,
The ſplendid palace ſhines; and riſing tides,
The green ſteps marking, murmur at the door.
To this fair Queen of Adria's ſtormy gulf,
The Mart of nations! long, obedient ſeas
Roll'd all the treaſure of the radiant Eaſt.
But now no more. Than one great tyrant worſe
(Whoſe ſhar'd oppreſſion lightens, a[illegible])
Each ſubject tearing, many tyrants role
The leaſt the proudeſt. Join'd in dark cabal,
They jealous, watchful, ſilent, and ſevere,
Caſt o'er the whole indiſſoluble chains:
The ſofter ſhackles of luxurious eaſe
They likewiſe added, to ſecure their ſway.
Thus Venice fainter ſhines; and Commerce thus,
Of toil impatient, flags the drooping ſail.
Burſting, beſides, his ancient bounds, he took
* A larger circle; found another † ſeat,
Opening a thouſand ports, and charg'd with toil,
Whom nothing can diſmay, far other ſons.

The Mountains then, clad with eternal ſnow,
Confeſs Man's power. Deep as the rampant rocks,
By Nature thrown inſuperable round,
Implanted there a † League of friendly ſtates,
And

* The Main Ocean.
† The Baltic.

And bade plain Freedom their ambition be.
There in the Vale, where rural Plenty fills,
From lakes, and meads, and furrow'd fields, her horn,
§ Chief, where the Leman pure emits the Rhone,
Rare to be seen! unguilty cities rise,
Cities of brothers form'd: while equal Life,
Accorded gracious with revolving Power,
Maintains them free; and, in their happy streets,
Nor cruel deed, nor misery is known.
For valour, faith, and innocence of life,
Renown'd, a rough laborious people, there,
Not only give the dreadful Alps to smile,
And press their culture on retiring snows;
But, to firm order train'd and patient war,
They likewise know, beyond the nerve remiss
Of mercenary force, how to defend
The tasteful little their hard toil has earn'd,
And the proud arm of Bourbon to defy.

EVEN, chear'd by me, their shaggy mountains charm,
More than or Gallic or Italian plains;
And sickening Fancy oft, when absent long,
† Pines to behold their Alpine views again:
The hollow-winding stream: the vale, fair-spread
Amid

§ Geneva, situated on the Lacus Lemanus, a small state, but a noble example of the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

† The Swiss, after having been long absent from their native country, are seized with such a violent desire of seeing it again

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